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Freedom through Right Thinking

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FREEDOM THROUGH RIGHT THINKING

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BY
LEWIS C. STRANG

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To All Truth Seekers
The Apostles of Freedom
The Guardians of Enlightenment
This Book is Dedicated
By the Author

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INTRODUCTION

When one has ceased to regard outward forms and ceremonials or dogmatic and creedal statements of primary importance, it is not easy to define accurately what one means by religion. After one has defined in a measure satisfactory to himself what he means by religion, it is not easy to get others to agree that his definition has any very vital meaning to them or has much of anything to do with what they conceive religion to be.

Obsessed as they so persistently are by the conviction that certain formulated opinions and the organized activities associated with them are religion, the average man and woman rarely overcome their prejudices sufficiently to perceive that one, who possibly has no use for any definitely stated theological concepts or beliefs, may be genuinely religious.

A man's religion is that which he believes to be true, to which he is devoted because he believes it to be true, which he serves and sacrifices for because he believes it to be true and therefore worth serving and sacrificing for.

There is a distinction between philosophy and religion, also between ethics and religion. Philosophy has to do with the coolly thought out and calmly orientated conclusions regarding what is conceived to be the impersonal truth. Ethics designates, defines and classifies what are believed to be the principles of sound, reasonable uprightness in human relationships of every sort.

While philosophy and ethics are not of themselves religion, men and women are continually making their particular philosophy and ethics a religion by the impas-

sioned, devoted and consecrated attitude of mind and heart which they have towards them. One concludes, therefore, that a man's religion is determined, not by any external condition or thing or concept, but by his attitude towards the external condition or thing or concept.

As a consequence of its very nature, religion is mystical. By that is meant that religion is vitalized, not by the logical processes of the dispassionate intellectual, but by the fire of the inspired poet and prophet, by the intuitive insight of the uplifted spirit, by the heart that is warm with the love of a cherished ideal.

In its most obviously genuine aspects, religion is not mysterious or vague, nor on the other hand is it essentially didactical or systematic. There is a natural freedom and simplicity to all true religious feelings and perceptions, a childlikeness, an absence of pose or self-consciousness. Mystery enters in when attempts are made to systematize, generalize and expand the individualistic religious experience into a scheme of sacred theology. To the extent that mystery gains ground, the inspirational mysticism of true religion disappears.

Inasmuch as by the mystical attitude which he has towards them one may make a religion out of philosophy and ethics, which are not of themselves in any way religious, he may with equal facility reverse the process and not make a religion out of that which he conscientiously but mistakenly believes to be his religion.

Many human beings believe that Christianity—meaning by that the teachings and practices of Jesus the Christ—is their religion, whereas they actually go no further than a calm, though hardly deep enough to be even modestly intelligent, agreement with the main points of a conventionalized so-called Christian philosophy, theology and ethics.

For fullness of life, mankind needs on the one side the vital inspiration and awakening vividness of spiritual perception which are characteristics of the mysticism of genuine religion, and on the other side the sanity and sound sense of proportion, the understanding of human conditions and problems, which come with the mental poise and self-mastery of philosophy and ethics.

Those in whom the exclusively religious attitude towards everyday living is over-emphasized tend to become fanatical and dogmatic in their judgments and conclusions. Those who are unduly absorbed in the philosophical and ethical are apt to lose the heartening, sympathetic touch with persons and their perplexities so necessary for an adequate appreciation of humanity's needs.

As with many other conditions that have to do with human affairs, he who sets a high mark for himself on the scale of idealistic living and accomplishment must strive to gain and to keep the happy mean between the characteristically religious and the characteristically philosophical and ethical points of view.

In the concept of many who are profoundly interested in the subject, mental and spiritual healing has the aspect of a religion, and this is a sound view. In the demonstration of mental and spiritual healing at its clearest and most convincing climaxes, the illumined and enlightened consciousness that comes with the conviction of contact with spiritual realities is markedly present.

This very fact, however, has led to an unfortunate identification of the technical and temporary processes of mental and spiritual healing with certain religious activities and customs. These, while well enough in themselves and helpful to many,—at least through the elementary stages of their development,—are nevertheless passing ways and means of human origin and expediency. They should not

be identified with the untrammeled soulfulness of true religion, constantly leading to fresh and enlarging views of life.

Inspiration and initiative are necessary for the successful practice of mental and spiritual healing, and inspiration and initiative will not long associate with a conventionalized theological attitude and its tendencies towards restrictive conservatism.

To correct the religious fanaticism, so apt to connect itself with all human interests that take on the atmosphere of sacredness and sanctity—a weakness to which those emotionally appealed to by the experience and practice of metaphysical healing are especially susceptible—the philosophy and ethics of mental and spiritual healing need to be stated, studied and lived.

I have, therefore, purposely avoided stressing the religious side of the subject. I have tried not to use words and phrases that have a distinctly religious flavor. I have also refrained from quoting Biblical authorities or using the recorded tales about Biblical personages to fortify a statement or illustrate a point. I have, indeed, taken issue with all phases of ecclesiasticism and the entire scheme of theology, which would reduce that which we call God to the plane of the humanly definable.

On this account, it may seem to some that I have laid myself open to the charge of being irreligious or even atheistic in my views. However, I am neither, though I am convinced that the whole subject of mental and spiritual healing should be freed from the theological and sanctimonious atmosphere, with which it is surrounded by so many of its adherents.

I believe in the teachings, ethics and ideals of Christianity, not necessarily as they are expounded and practised by some who most clamorously call themselves Christians,

but as I find them set forth in the words and deeds of the personage known to us as Jesus the Christ.

I am not concerned about church theories or dogmas, except to give them the attention one naturally pays to the beliefs and opinions of his fellow men. Also the sentimental sanctity with which many shroud the personal life of Jesus, and the perennial speculations regarding his birth and resurrection, do not mean anything really vital to me, though I am profoundly desirous of obtaining a correct perception of the mental and spiritual quality and understanding that have made him a paramount influence with universal humanity. But to worship his personality or to look upon him as God, are to me unthinkable perversions.

Since the year 1900, I have been deeply interested in Christian Science. In 1904, I became a professional practitioner of Christian Science, and in 1907, an authorized teacher. My right to teach was given to me by Mary Baker Eddy in recognition of my work with her and for her as a member of her household at Pleasant View, Concord, New Hampshire. I am a member of The First Church of Christ, Scientist, of Boston, Massachusetts, commonly known as The Mother Church.

It is but just for me to acknowledge the revolution that took place in my thinking and point of view after becoming acquainted with Mrs. Eddy's writings, as the result of years of study given them, and through the medium of instruction from Mrs. Eddy herself.

Although the views developed in this book unquestionably have been radically and definitely shaped by the concept of truth embodied by Mrs. Eddy in Christian Science, they are not an attempt to re-state Mrs. Eddy's teachings and theories, and they are not intended to be an exposition or explanation or unveiling of her views or beliefs. I

consider them to be in accord with the principle that she discovered, demonstrated and set forth in her writings. Other Christian Scientists may or may not agree with me in that. I do not claim to express anyone's opinions except my own.

The adherents of the various schools, concerned with the problem of coping with physical disease and other human woes by means of some form of mental treatment, may be roughly divided into two camps. In the one are the psychologists, the psycho-analysts, the Freudians, the hypnotists; in the other are the Christian Scientists, the metaphysicians and mental scientists, the spiritualists and other religionists who believe in some phase of healing by prayer or faith.

It is not claimed that those in the first camp agree specifically in the details of theory or practice. They stand together on the broad basis that they are dealing with the personal minds of human beings, that they are trying to affect, change or control the personal mind of a human being through some sort of a reasoning, suggestive or hypnotic process originating in their own personal mind. They agree that mental power means exclusively and entirely the potentialities and activities of the human mind.

It emphatically is not claimed that those in the second camp agree either in their theories regarding mental healing or their methods of practising it. But they, too, have a certain common ground in that they conceive of an especial and peculiar element, essential to the healing, which is not derived from the personal human mind nor fundamentally dependent upon it. They usually call this transcendental element God, and thus quite generally surround their conception and practice of mental healing with a religious atmosphere. This in turn tends to become characteristically ecclesiastical and formal.

One purpose of this book on the practice and potency of right thinking is to express and explain in a manner free from religious and sentimental emotionalism, and without any background of personal or organized authority, propositions in connection with the whole subject of mental healing, which have been formulated after a broad experience in both practice and teaching.

Naturally I believe these propositions to be logically and inspirationally sound, but as far as human responsibility is concerned, I alone stand sponsor for them. They are the way I look at things, stated as simply and clearly as I am able to at the present time.

Another purpose is to indicate, from the standpoint of the philosopher as well as from that of the practical demonstrator, the essential unity underlying the entire concept of mental healing, rationalizing on the one hand the rather vague and sometimes superstitious beliefs of the religionists, on the other hand bringing to the materialistic, mechanistic and dogmatic views of the psychologist and experimenter in hypnotic suggestion some vision of the realm of spiritual perception and realization where he must find the quality that will genuinely vitalize his work.

Two possible criticisms I wish to forestall. The first is regarding the use of the deductive method, at present somewhat decried as out-of-date, in reaching my conclusions, especially when I might be expected to cite cases that have come under my observation during many years of practice and from them induce my findings in accord with the accepted modern scientific custom. The second is that after all is said and done I have not told in a definite way how to heal metaphysically, and that consequently the reader is left in doubt and unsatisfied on the most important point of all.

Valuable experimental work is being done in a number of fields to determine how far the mind controls the body. I believe that some time it will be proved to the satisfaction of all that the mind controls the body fully. Accumulating evidence to this effect in the range of my experience leads me to regard this consummation as inevitable. But in defence of my use of the deductive method, I have to acknowledge that I am not of the painstaking turn of mind which so admirably busies itself with the collection and collocation of material facts until a definite conclusion is indisputably established. My mental trend is inspirational and philosophical rather than patiently scientific, and I should miss my aim entirely if I should try to set forth my subject in a manner that does not fit my habit of thought nor carry out my desire to invigorate and refresh spiritually as well as to convince intellectually.

To offset the possible criticism of indefiniteness, I advance the consideration that no statement of a *way* of mental procedure—no method compounded of sayings and mental doings, however broad and progressive—can ever be anything but relative and temporary. The moment an inspired concept or idea is pinned down to a definite statement, that moment the statement as an adequate presentation of the idea becomes obsolete. It no longer is an up-to-date expression of the concept or idea. A fresh statement becomes necessary, which in its turn is instantaneously obsolete as soon as formulated.

I am not attempting to train anyone in the way or in a way to practise metaphysical healing. Indeed, I am convinced that such a training is impossible. I am tremendously concerned in educating men and women—using the word "educate" in its original meaning, "to bring forth or draw out"—to be metaphysical healers spontane-

ously and naturally. If the reader will be generous enough to follow the unfolding point of view and not over-concern himself about the way to accomplish the healing, he may have the enlightening experience of naturally being that which does the healing.

CHAPTER I

Practical Aspects of Metaphysics

Summary: The metaphysics one lives is the metaphysics one believes to be true—The necessity of making a choice between idealism and materialism—Misunderstandings that arise from using the word God—Various theories regarding the healing of physical disease by mental means—What is meant by mental and spiritual healing—Possibility of a universal law of healing—Need of freeing one's self from the mesmerism attached to the accustomed meaning of words, from traditional and customary religious and medical beliefs, and from the domination of personality—The essential point of view in order to comprehend the teachings of the Bible and of Jesus—Infallibility is never found in human persons or systems.

It is somewhat of a commonplace to declare that physics, that branch of science dealing with the material world, is founded on metaphysics, using the word in the Kantian sense as meaning the science of truth, freedom and immortality. But it is not quite so much of a commonplace to advance the claim that a clearer and fuller understanding of sound metaphysics will lead naturally to greater control of all physical and material conditions through more effectively directed mental and spiritual activity.

It is unfortunate that the orthodox student and expounder of metaphysics is so consistently a theorizer and speculator with little concern about the practical application and effect of his theories and speculations on everyday affairs. While inquiring into the essential nature of reality on the one hand, he is usually content on the other hand to accept the accustomed routine of daily living and experience as a fixed and unchangeable condition—at least, a condition to be modified slowly and laboriously by

forces and influences beyond his immediate control or direction.

The tendency of all this is to make even the most devoted metaphysical investigators theorists rather than demonstrators. Their speculative metaphysics, though a tremendously important element in their self-consciously directed mental lives, are not usually vital factors in determining the nature or changing the aspects of their day by day experience. To put it another way, the metaphysics they speculate about and the metaphysics they live are two entirely separate propositions.

Now the metaphysics they live is the metaphysics they actually accept as true, though perhaps quite a different metaphysics from that which they formally proclaim to be true. Whether one will or will not, he lives his actual metaphysical concept, and it is often in striking contrast to the metaphysical concept about which he talks and writes.

This statement will at first consideration be generally accepted as reasonable only within a comparatively narrow radius. It will be readily admitted that a man who is brutal and sensual in his mental makeup is likely to have brutal and sensual experiences in his daily life. Notwithstanding this fairly well established view of a specific condition, the general habit of thought regarding human affairs as a whole instinctively leads us all to regard mankind as the victim rather than the maker of its environment.

On this account, it is not easy for the untrained mind to make the reasonable and logical deduction that if the brutal and sensual man makes for himself a brutal and sensual environment, then all men and women live in the environment that is natural to their quality of mental concept.

It should be noted that the reverse of this condition—the insistent claim of everyday wisdom that the presence of a brutal and sensual environment is the sure indication of a brutal and sensual state of mind—is not necessarily the fact. Environments are always relative, never absolute. Cleanliness and filth must be judged according to the standards of the human mentalities involved, if one is to determine what is cleanliness to these mentalities and what is filth. Personal relationships to material conditions cannot justly be viewed from a suppositionary absolute standpoint.

While in a last analysis it is true that man makes his environment, it is not true that the conclusions which you and I arrive at, on account of our personal views or beliefs regarding another's environment, are necessarily sound. It is not true that the actual nature and quality of an individual man or woman can be determined by a superficial and casual examination of his physical surroundings and material circumstances.

Mental flowerings of beauty and truth are continually springing out of what seems to be soil of the grossest materialism. It must be noted that under all circumstances the mental quality is dominant. The mental quality controls, colors and defines environment, but the mental quality is not controlled, colored nor defined by environment.

It is indeed a far-reaching generalization, a proposition which the detail of human experience seems constantly to contradict and refute, that a man's metaphysics determines the kind of human being he is, the human life he lives, the degree of felicity he enjoys, even the health and success he has, the sickness and failure that beset him.

This is the thesis in favor of which I propose to argue—not, of course, making the unwarranted claim that the whole of so tremendous a proposition, or anything near

the whole, can be here and now proved, but hoping to indicate to some a possible way to greater immediate mental and spiritual unfoldment and to point out a promising line of advancement along which a few steps have already been taken.

I shall endeavor to show that as the shackles of mental habit and routine are more definitely broken, and the remedial agency of intelligent thinking from a satisfactory and comprehensive metaphysical principle is more effectively applied to the human problem, the individual human being's life experience will afford clearer and more positive practical evidences of purposeful dominion and harmonious progress.

This normal process of growth and development, bringing to individual man and through him into race experience sanity of mind, culture of soul, and harmony of body, I have chosen to call mental and spiritual healing. I have habitually used the word "heal" in its broad original meaning, "to make hale, sound or whole," eschewing the more common and more restricted meaning, "to cure of a disease." I regard the cure of specific physical ailments as the natural and to-be-expected effect of mental and spiritual healing.

Not so very long ago the declaration that physical disease could be healed by mental means would have been disputed, but now the fact that diseases classified by materia medica as organic, as well as diseases classified as nervous and functional, have been and are commonly healed by mental treatment, will be readily admitted by anyone well enough informed to speak with authority.

There is, however, a well defined disagreement in the theories advanced to account for the healing and in the methods or processes by which it is claimed the healing is accomplished. Some affirm that mental suggestion—

that is to say, the effects produced by hypnotism or those resulting from the personal determination, no matter how idealistic, of one human mind acting on another, also the effects of environment on the human mind or the effects through auto-suggestion of the human mind on itself—explains satisfactorily all cases of mental healing.

I admit without argument that mental suggestion does account for a great many instances of what is called mental healing, possibly for the majority of them. It also accounts for all the cases of healing by drugs, hygienic systems and even surgery, though the claim regarding surgery may not be at once accepted.

Nevertheless, it has been my experience, covering nearly a quarter of a century of study, investigation, experimentation and practical work as a mental healer, that there is mental healing which is not produced by mental suggestion and which indicates the presence of a universal law, little understood and on that account little used with conscious, definite purpose, but still a constantly available law when the conditions of a mental and spiritual nature under which it operates are fulfilled.

Julius Cæsar never had an electric light, and it would have been a vain task to try to persuade him that an electric light was a possibility. Julius Cæsar's lack and ignorance do not prove that the law, which today produces the electric light, was not a law in Julius Cæsar's time as it is now. It was ignorance of the law, not absence of the law, which prevented Julius Cæsar from writing his memoirs by electric illumination.

Ignorance of a law of mental and spiritual healing operative apart from the realm of mental suggestion—a law made active through inspiration and realization, intuition and perception, through the application of an illumined intelligence to the traditions, customs, habits and fixities

of the human problem—is not an argument against the existence of such a law. A little consistent demonstration of its presence and power is an answer to all claims of its absence and nothingness.

I am convinced that an inquiry into the quality and nature of the essential original called God, a clearer understanding of man's true being and function, his place and part in the divine economy, his relationship to the world of things which includes his relationship to the mentality and physicality that he calls himself, will go far towards indicating that the theory of a universal law governing metaphysical healing is not entirely unreasonable.

I am hopeful that the effects, which will be observable in the sense experience of those to whom the reasonableness of this theory of a universal law of mental and spiritual healing makes an especially convincing appeal, will tend to prove both the fact and something of the why and how of its present workings in the daily affairs of mankind.

It is not necessary to present here the arguments of idealistic philosophy in favor of the hypothesis that mind is the basic reality of being and that man lives in a world of mental impressions and not in a world of material things. The intelligent human being must make a choice between theories. He must choose either the idealistic and mental concept of life and its experiences or the materialistic and mechanistic concept.

I have no quarrel with those who choose the latter view. I simply do not agree with them, and I leave them to their own devices. Because to do so is satisfactory to me and to many others, I assume the soundness of the general claim of idealistic philosophy that life is a mental and not a physical experience, and that the essential original, the primary substance, is mind and not matter.

One quite naturally calls this essential original, God, for the reason that almost every one, who deals with the problem of life philosophically and metaphysically, does so. By using this particular word, one escapes some difficulties and steps into others. He escapes the charge of atheism, no mean achievement in itself, but he swings dangerously near the miasma of characteristic theological beliefs and theories, the basis and reason for which is the concept of a God-Person.

Again I have no quarrel with those who are satisfied with their particular theological opinions. To such I can only say that formal theology of any sort does not appeal to me. The only theology I can accept is that science of the divine which ever eludes definite statement in dogma or creed. My religion is the pursuit of the ever unfolding truth, which has always been revealed in the greatest measure to those rare souls who have been freest from the restrictions and conventions of dominant religious beliefs.

The essential original, which for convenience' sake I call God, the nature of which I intend more fully and definitely to inquire into, assuredly is not, according to my view, the extremely personal Being of human-like attributes and despotic tendencies preached about in most churches and earnestly prayed to by the vast majority of religious devotees.

As the fine arts were for centuries restricted in their spontaneous expression and development by too close an association with the church and the limitations and superstitions which accompany such an alliance, so today the great subject of mental and spiritual healing, habitually and possibly necessarily launched into popular attention on the obvious ways of a religious appeal, has become

circumscribed, dwarfed and even misconceived by the conventional and traditional theological concepts and beliefs of times mentally and spiritually outgrown.

A less specialized and broader visioned investigation of the entire subject of mental and spiritual healing is much needed, and to accomplish this it is necessary to cut loose from all churchly and dogmatic limitations. If there is any truth in metaphysical healing, it is a scientific truth which has no more to do with temporary human beliefs about piety, sanctity and morals than has the law of gravitation.

The field occupied by the churches is unquestionably an important one to those who believe that they need churches, just as the field occupied by materia medica is an important one to those who believe that they need the conventional medical ministrations. But in the open forum of free thought and experimentation, not even the time-honored traditions and customs of church or medical school can be accepted at their face value. They must bear the scrutiny of intelligent thought analysis, and stand or fall according to their demonstrable worth.

In order to apply this intelligence to human problems, one must consistently keep himself free from three distinct influences—the mesmeric suggestions that accompany the meanings which he personally attaches to words, the domination of personality and the thralldom of habit.

Under present conditions, one human being must use words in order to communicate with another human being. Words are both a convenience and a limitation—a convenience because they are the best means for conveying thought that the human mind has yet invented, a limitation because the sound or sight of them constantly deceives the one who hears and sees into believing that he

understands when he is familiar only with the sound or sight. On this account, words often prevent thought even as they often seem to promote thought.

Again, the meanings of words are in no way exact or fixed. They have the meanings that the users place upon them. Their meanings are always colored and determined by the mental concept of the writer or speaker. Two human beings may use the same words and mean distinctly different things. Particularly is this likely to be so when metaphysical subjects are under discussion—markedly so when the metaphysician uses, as he must, words which originally had untechnical meanings, but which have taken on definite philosophical or theological colorings and so have become associated with specific philosophical or ecclesiastical beliefs.

Unless there is some comprehension of the idea which the words are intended to convey, the words are apt to be deceptive. Unless the users of words have a common understanding as regards the meaning of the words they use, they cannot intelligently communicate with each other. They are as much befogged as if they spoke different languages, and the more dangerously befogged for believing that they speak the same language. Indeed, they do speak different languages, although they may make the same sounds.

The words of the Bible and especially the words recorded in the Gospels as those of Jesus, because they are so generally regarded as sacred, lead to many peculiar misunderstandings and deceptions which a little intelligent thinking would quickly correct.

What one reads in the Bible is the expression in words of the efforts of a great many men of different times and climes to record certain ideas that they have deemed important and true. At some time an idea was expressed by

somebody in some way. This was the original Biblical concept. It has been added to and taken away from by a multitude of recorders and editors and commentators, most of them doubtless believing that they were faithfully expressing the basic meaning. The original idea has filtered through many minds and many languages. How much of it remains, how much of it has been lost, is an open question.

Certain it is that unless some sort of common denominator in the realm of the inspirational and perceptive is arrived at, and the words of the Bible are constantly interpreted and re-interpreted in the light of spiritual illumination and realization, the Bible is more apt to be meaningless or even positively misleading than a safe guide to either a present or future salvation.

The most that can be soundly said of the words, claimed to be those of Jesus, is that the original idea was thought and expressed by someone of mental and spiritual authority, and it is reasonable to conclude that his name was Jesus. What this personage said was remembered in substance and conveyed by word of mouth to others who remembered what they believed they heard.

As far as is known, not a single word was written down for at least a half-century after Jesus passed away. It is likely, therefore, that what was then written down bears only a resemblance to what Jesus actually said—that the written word is the clouded remnant of what was left after transmission from lip to lip by the various rememberers of what was from time to time told them.

How can one expect to get any insight at all into Jesus' original concept unless he can in a measure parallel Jesus' state of mind with something in his own state of mind? One must gain through his own mental and spiritual experience some sense of the idea that Jesus must

have had in order to find a reliable meaning for the words that are used to indicate Jesus' views and teachings.

What is true of the Bible, is true of everything that was ever written or spoken. One must gain an intelligent view or comprehension of the actual mental and spiritual standpoint of the speaker or writer—he must grasp the metaphysics of the speaker or writer—if he would really understand and justly accept or reject the thesis that is being presented.

This common ground naturally cannot be found in the realm of delusive personal beliefs and opinions, in externalized forms and activities. It is most vividly presented in that individual or collective unity of mind and spirit, which accompanies a broad and intelligent perception and feeling of actuality in mental and spiritual quality—the inspirational realizations which always precede satisfying expressions in form, outline and color.

The understanding mind and heart must be in tune with this actual quality and thereby become in tune with other minds and hearts that are in tune with the quality. This tuning is continuously necessary. One cannot tune a violin, lay it aside, and expect it to be in tune the next time he picks it up. He must constantly tune it to keep it in tune. So with ourselves, we cannot tune up once and stay in tune for all eternity. By freshly inspired thinking, by enlarging perceptions of the truth of being, we must keep tuning ourselves up in order ever to be in tune.

Considering the two other influences from which it is essential to keep one's self free if he is to view the human problem intelligently, one will find that the domination of personality includes that of one's own personality as well as that of others, and that the thralldom of habit is caused

by one's own prejudices, traditions, customs and environment quite as much as by those of others. One cannot begin to think sanely, with breadth of vision and wisdom of discriminating judgment, until he has broken away somewhat from these two mental tyrants.

To believe that a thing is so because somebody—one's self or another—says that it is so, is forever to shut one's self out from knowing that it is so. When one is in such a mental state, it does not even occur to him to investigate. Without independent investigation, one can never really know whether a proposition is true or false. He gets no further than believing that he knows.

The condition is not changed by the person on whom one bestows the unwarranted authority. We may say that we know a thing is true because Jesus the Christ said that it was true. We may even say we know it to be true because the particular personal God in whom we believe said it, and because it is recorded in the Bible that He said it. None of this affects the simple fact that the truth is true because it is true, not because somebody says that it is true, and that what is true can be learned only through individual investigation and demonstration.

Deeply imbedded in the mental reactions of all humanity is the bondage of habit and custom. Each of us has his own special heritage, his family training, his business and social peculiarities, his own mental and physical environment. These do not determine what manner of man he is, but they do suggest strongly his personal temperament, character and dominant point of view. Most of us accept these suggestions at their face value and fulfill to the letter their obligations.

In addition, some of us carry the burden of the white man's civilization and religion, and others of us carry the

burden of the yellow man's, the black man's or the red man's—always the same burden tied up with a differently colored string.

We call ourselves Christians, Mohammedans, Buddhists, and the rest of the world heathen, infidels, unbelievers. So far as metaphysical quality is concerned, the choice between us is mostly a matter of preference as regards labels. What we are accustomed to, we are prone to accept as necessary, as right, as divinely appointed, to be lived for and to be died for, but rarely to be intelligently thought about. Such is the thralldom of habit, that procession of daily routine so used to, so traditionally correct, that thought about it actually seems unthinkable.

In fact, we constantly find ourselves confronted with the restrictive fear that it is dangerous to rely upon individual intelligence, understanding and conviction for salvation either physically or spiritually. It is the stock-in-trade argument of all conventionalized ecclesiastical and medical systems that unless the stamp of authority, divine or human, is placed on a declaration or an activity, humanity has no sure means of distinguishing between the true and the untrue, the safe and the unsafe.

So humanity, instead of thinking for itself, on the contrary overwhelmingly fearful of thinking out anything for itself, travels from the cradle to the grave in a vain but ceaseless search for somebody or something that will infallibly tell it what to believe and what to do in order to be saved here or hereafter.

A sense or belief of infallibility should never be attached to any human being or any mundane thing, to any finite organization or system, to any church or political concept. Infallibility is an ideal, which—and for this we may be thankful—can never be for anyone an actuality. To be infallible would be to attain the end, which is another

way of saying that the achievement of infallibility would be annihilation.

Eternal life is eternal unfoldment, or else it is a meaningless term. Perfection as a completion is an impossibility, except it be the perfection of total destruction, against which the spirit of man instinctively and righteously rebels.

No matter how wise, how far-seeing, how successful a human being may be, it is a tremendous misconception to attach to him the slightest vestige of infallibility. No matter how gratifying, how essential, a human process or system may seem to be, it is utterly stupid to characterize it as in any way infallible.

The law of universal progressiveness, never really violated though often hidden from immediate discernment, in due course is bound to take the whole of humanity beyond the attainment of any single person or the activities of any number of persons.

CHAPTER II

God as a Theory and as a Reality

Summary: Why every human being's concept of God is entitled to respect and consideration—Psychological and religious difficulties encountered in a discussion of God—Our real God is indicated by the qualities expressed in daily living—Mankind's need of a satisfactory God—How the concept of God as Love is gained and given an understandable meaning—Difference between being God and being what God is—Analysis of various definitions of God—God, as mankind knows Him, cannot be a fixed and unchanging Being—What one means when he says that there is one God—True living is the interplay of vision and accomplishment—Human experience is the measure of the immediate understanding of God.

Every human being's concept of God is entitled to the greatest respect and consideration. Whether the human being is one of a savage tribe still given to human sacrifices on the sly, or whether he represents what we are accustomed to regard as the highest type of modern civilization, his concept of God is in each instance the epitome of his hopes and his fears, of his ideals and his desires. It is the focus point of his thoughts, his yearnings and his dreams. It declares both the best of him and the worst of him.

However trivial, contradictory, inconsequential, immature, illogical or absurd it may seem to others, to him it is of profound moment. No matter what form it may take, no matter whether its expression be transcendentally metaphysical or grossly physical, no matter whether it be blessed or damnable, it is for him the reverenced and the awesome, the holy and the terrible.

To love their God and to look upon Him as good, is not

natural to elemental humanity. Primarily God is to them an acknowledgement of failure and a concession to despair. When they themselves can do no more and see no farther, they search in imagination and mystery for an antidote to their impotence. What they find is their God. There is little or no satisfaction in the notion of God for either the child or the primitive. To them God is the personification of their inadequacies and their dreads. The power with which they mostly endow Him is that of being able to make them suffer if He so chooses.

To love God and to be the beloved of Him, is an idea that has developed slowly, and it is still feeble and uncertain in the perceptions and expectations of the average among mankind. To fear their God and to seek out ways to propitiate Him, is the primitive human instinct.

No human being's concept of God has ever proved to be true, and of course no human being's concept of God can be God Himself. Inferentially all human beings have held their particular God to be all-powerful and therefore infinite,—conditions or attributes which have made it impossible for Him to be cognized correctly and completely by finite and limited human mentalities. Consequently human views of God cannot avoid being mistaken and misleading, temporary and changing.

This statement does not have to be argued when it is applied to the God-notions of primitive peoples. Essential phases of their beliefs about God have been outgrown by the human beings of today, at least by those with whom most of us associate. One can see quite clearly that the beliefs of primitives, civilized or uncivilized, are the expressions of undeveloped mentalities and the personifications of uncultured intuitions, savage and barbarous instincts, limited personal and tribal experiences.

It is evident that such concepts of God are entirely formed and colored by the dominant customs and habits of the human beings who hold them, and that the conceptions conform to traditions and customary ways of thinking and living. Although such beliefs regarding divinity may be considered by those who hold them as revelations from the divinity Himself, nevertheless they are manifestly the to-be-expected gatherings together and deifications of the humanity that claims to be the favored recipient of the revelations. It is impossible to understand a people's God until one understands the people whose God He is.

What is difficult for the contemporaneous human being to perceive is that his own concept of God is no more essentially true and no more God Himself, than is that of the generations of mankind that have gone before him or live contemporarily with him. Reason and religion have journeyed side by side in the minds of men from the very beginning, but it is the rarest of spectacles to see them clasp hands and stand together on the common ground of intelligence and truth.

The modern concept of God, whatever and whosesoever it may be, is indeed entitled to the greatest respect and consideration, for it is the presentation of the best that the modern has to offer, the best of himself, the most cherished and intimate expectations and yearnings of heart and soul. But it must be subjected to the closest scrutiny and the keenest analysis, for it is also the presentation of the worst that he is, the worst that he imagines and believes—the fears, the ignobilities, the meannesses, which he would not dare to declare in any other way and which he would be ashamed to declare if he realized that he was doing it.

Therefore, a genuine and deep-seated difficulty is en-

countered in starting a discussion of God. This is due to the characteristically materialistic point of view of the typical religionist. Quite naturally and inevitably, his God is never more than a theory and a supposition, but the religionist does not for a moment believe that his God is a theory and a supposition. Because his God is theoretical and suppositional, his views and concepts of God are largely sentimental and emotional. They are unconsciously but almost indelibly impressed upon him at his mother's knee. They are traditional and mythological rather than individual and actual.

This does not mean that they are not deeply and sincerely believed in. It means that their genesis is not generally recognized and that their hearsay and suggestive quality is not usually comprehended. It is not seen that in this vagueness regarding antecedents and in this domination by suggestion they partake, not so much of divinity, as of the leading characteristics of contemporaneous human living. They have so much of human beauty and sacredness associated with them, that men and women, altogether casually but nevertheless unfortunately, find it difficult to set aside even temporarily the associations of beauty and sacredness, and then honestly with open minds examine that which they call their God, bringing to bear upon their sense of Him the clear light of sound critical judgment.

The typical religionist, to be sure, does not visualize himself as in a situation like the one described, and perhaps would be afraid to acknowledge it if he did. Nevertheless, lurking in the mental background of the most devoted and faithful is almost always a haunting question or doubt concerning their faith, if not concerning their righteousness. This causes them instinctively to avoid too definite a test of their faith by logic or reason. Of course, their

dread is without excuse. If their God is the true God, He will stand any test. Their confidence in Him will then be the greater, and their trust in Him the more assured. If their views and concepts of Him are sane and broad, they will be the more firmly established by fair, impartial investigation.

If, on the other hand, misconceptions and misunderstandings have entered into their speculations, no price is too great to pay for the advantage of finding this out. Until it is found out, there is no possibility of starting a fresh line of thought and experience with more promising prospects. Yet so fearful are the men and women, who set great store on their knowledge of God, of finding themselves wrong, that rather than run the risk of doing so, they will self-righteously and wilfully shut themselves out from ever knowing that they are right.

My purpose in considering the general subject of God as a theory and a reality is not to discuss theological and dogmatic religious opinions about God. My purpose is to show how any actual knowledge of that which we term God is obtained, and how this knowledge, which has its basis and beginning in individual human experience, is broadened by the natural and reasonable processes of our everyday mentality into an expanding realization of what may be sanely held to be a universal truth concerning God and a universalized perception and love of His ways and works.

I begin, therefore, with individual experience, a great deal of which is the common possession of an ages-old humanity brought to a culmination in you and me. From individual experience, mine and yours and the others', I shall try to deduce—or show how it is or may be deduced —the tremendous generalization, bounded only by theoretical infinity itself, which is assembled for the purposes

of human definition and comprehension under the one word, God.

When one considers any subject, himself for example, the immediate mental process is to objectify that which is under mental inspection. This is done by picturing the subject as an entity apart from the mentality inspecting it—in an external position where it can be comfortably examined. Even when thinking about such an intimate subject as himself, one invariably separates himself from himself in order to do it. Occasionally he becomes so convinced that the one pictured as apart from himself is actually himself, that he is mentally bewildered and lost in attempting to be a picture instead of being himself. In extreme instances, this is called insanity.

If a mental concept is under the sort of inspection just described and the externalization is entirely a psychological one, it is plain that no real separation between the thinker and the thought-about has taken place. The apparent externalization is a concept in the thinker's mind, and it has no other kind of existence. For one to endow this mental concept or belief with the same sort of independent existence that is given the separate entities and objects of generally accepted sense experience, is to be deceived by one's own mental processes. To convey this deception to others, however well-intentioned and earnest one may be in the doing of it, is to be guilty of promulgating a delusion.

God has long been man's most absorbing and fascinating study. Through the ages, man has thought about God and talked about God, and even more constantly has he given himself up to sentimentalizing over God. To do this in the most satisfying manner, in order to have the comforting sense of Somebody or Something tangible and definite and in accord with general human imaginings,

mankind has consistently followed psychologically the line of least resistance by putting God out there where He can be viewed with the proper artistic perspective.

There is no particular harm in this as a ready means of finding out what one's concept of God actually is, but there is tremendous harm in looking upon the mental picture of one's concept of God as an externalized God. One definitely deleterious result is that most of us, when faced squarely with our concept of God, discover that we are believing in an imagined portraiture of an Almighty Human Being, a personalized Somebody who is somewhere else, and who carries on all by Himself a kind of complete and independent perfection.

We hope that by some happy chance we may hit upon the magical combination that will open the way to Him, or that we shall somehow or other succeed in running up the signal that will bring Him to us. Of these two accomplishments we are not, to be sure, overconfident, and consequently our ways with God are commonly ways of uncertainty, question and doubt.

But of one thing we are confident—deeply, deeply confident—that some time and in some way we must establish a connection with this all-inclusive and all-sufficient Person, who has gone on and will continue to go on through eternity without any real necessity of making a connection with us. All religious systems are built upon the belief that mankind must make the connection, and in addition precisely the right connection, or perish.

A splendid way to get a clear, revealing view of this almost universal concept of God is to read some of the Arabian Nights tales and become thoroughly conversant with the ancient eastern views of authority and rulership. One will readily perceive, if he can step enough outside his own traditional prejudices to get a fair per-

spective on his own state of belief, that the popular notions about God are, without exception and regardless of the different names they go under, throw-backs to old-time popular notions about the supreme potentate of an outgrown despotism. They portray the absolute monarch whose word is law, whose favors are lavishly bestowed on those who gratify his whims, whose punishments are swift to such as violate them. We have banished this atrocity politically, but we have sanctified it theologically.

It is by no means far-fetched or unreasonable to declare that in order to know God at all aright, one must consistently and continuously look beyond all established beliefs about God. Manifestly our real God cannot be a God whom we only theorize about or whom we picture to ourselves as God according to our comprehension of someone else's theories about Him.

Our real God must be sought for, not in our theories or our beliefs or our sentiments about God, but in the practical, working knowledge of mental and spiritual reality—in our daily-made-evident understanding of life itself—which we at the moment actually possess and more or less unconsciously express. Our real God is represented by the God-like qualities and also by the devil-like qualities which we are manifesting in our everyday living. This is the only real God that any of us has or ever will have—a poor thing, it may be, but our own.

If we do not like our God—and the only intelligent reason or purpose of our daily experience is to find out whether we do or do not like Him—then it is our privilege, until it becomes our necessity, to change Him and get acquainted with a better and more satisfactory God. If we do this—if all mankind does this—human experience is improved, the law of progress is demonstrated, God is revealed in new and higher meanings.

Indeed, if one does not have a truly satisfactory God, he has no God at all. What does an unsatisfactory God do to the one who believes in Him? What happens to men and women whose God is afar off, whose God is one whom they are constantly striving to get in touch with but never quite sure that they are succeeding? Such a God is the maker of mental darkness and doubt. He is the creator of fear and superstition. He leads His worshippers to the loss of self-respect and finally to the unworthy self-abasement which is always the product of tyranny. In short, instead of having a God, these men and women have a devil, a very active and tormenting devil, who is eminently successful in making a first-class hell out of life.

Mankind needs and must have a God who is at hand, regarding whom there is no question at all of being constantly in touch—not a God who may hear one's appeal in a personal way, provided it is couched in just the language to please Him, but a God who knows and answers even before one consciously perceives his need, a God who is indeed acquainted with the thoughts and intents of the heart. This is the God mankind can have and does have as soon as it knows enough to drop superstitious beliefs about God and prove in the practical affairs of daily living that this God is its God.

Mathematics is called an exact science dealing only with the concrete and knowable. Yet, in order to demonstrate certain geometrical problems, the mathematician is obliged to make assumptions, which are true only as mental concepts. From the standpoint of practical, everyday experience, these assumptions can never be anything but theories incapable of expression in a manner satisfactory to the five physical senses.

The mathematician assumes that a line has length only without breadth or height, that a point has position only

without dimension—many other propositions that are purely theoretical; more than that, quite meaningless from a physical standpoint. They are, however, necessary or convenient assumptions for the mathematician to make, and he must deal with them as realities, if he is to demonstrate the truth of certain geometrical problems, which when demonstrated become of practical value in the realm of sense experience.

When the mathematician thus turns to mental assumptions for a working hypothesis, he of course becomes a metaphysician. The basis of mathematics, though mathematics seemingly deals so exclusively with material sense propositions, is metaphysical. The mathematical processes are not inherently mechanistic, though superficially they may seem so. They are based, as already indicated, on suppositions of a purely mental nature. They constantly appeal to the imagination, and they are very generally dependent upon inspiration for the key with which to unlock their truths.

By a similar process of assumption for the purpose of producing a practical and worthy effect in the realm of sense experience, the metaphysician, continually on the search for what is true, posits certain ultimates as the source or beginning or abode of the elements or qualities which he finds active in human progress.

He finds that which he calls intelligence is a most necessary and active factor in all phases of humanity's development. The man or woman who has it—who expresses it by keen, clear thinking and wise, sane acting—evidences a nobler selfhood, a greater freedom and a more efficient dominion over the limitations that beset his less intelligent neighbors. Intelligence proves its goodness and truth.

For the purposes of human apprehension and understanding, it must be given a background or source. The

common religious practice has been to call this background or source God, and then to beg the question of the nature and meaning of God by zealously making believe that the name is the guarantee of a truth and the proof of an actuality.

The metaphysicians of a sort have sometimes been a little more explicit and named the assumed background or source Mind—even gone a step farther, and to indicate the universality, impersonality and infinitude of the source, have called it the divine Mind. But they, too, have generally begged the question by trying to believe and make others believe that in thus naming an assumption they have discovered an entity.

They are in the position a mathematician would be, if, when he had assumed for the purpose of practically demonstrating a problem that there was such a thing as a line with length only, he had called his assumption Line with a capital "L," and then proceeded to feel awesome and ecstatic and pious with the hope that "Line" would be pleased thereby and somehow or other work out by itself the particular mathematical problem under consideration. It is self-evident that the assumption regarding line is nothing of itself. It is a means to an end. If the end is accomplished, and if the end is worth accomplishing, the assumption is justified and has served a good purpose.

Assumptions about God—His nature, being, quality, purpose and desire—stand, as do all other human assumptions, on a pragmatical basis. Do they help human beings to be more intelligent—to think more freely and definitely, to act more wisely and efficiently—under the conditions of everyday living? The conditions of everyday living I refer to are strictly communal and personal, always relative and temporary. I have no generalization, no notion of absolute right and wrong, in mind. I regard the test

of intelligence as quite equally involved in the ability to change points of view and activities as in the ability to follow a concept and its attendant external manifestations to their full development.

It is because such an expedient is necessary for common thinking and common talking under our present conditions of varying concepts and imperfect intercommunications—because in order to comprehend each other we must reduce our concepts as much as possible to common denominators and expand them into dangerously broad generalizations—that we say the intelligence, which makes for present harmony and future growth in the affairs of mankind, has a starting place or an abode, something in which it "lives, moves and has its being," which we name Mind. To indicate that this background must be without limitations, we call it infinite Mind.

We also recognize that progress and development are dependent on inspiration and perception—that all new ideas are usually born in some individual consciousness with an influx of light and conviction. We assume a source or background for this constantly recurring spiritual element, and we declare that God is Spirit.

It is learned that the elements which make for genuinely satisfactory living—for spontaneity, freshness and vivacity of thought and realization as contrasted with the humdrum monotony and routine of uninspired existence however materially comfortable—are present with or in this intelligent and inspirational activity which we have characterized as Spirit, and so we say that Spirit is Life.

Consistent living under the influence and illumination of intelligence and inspiration develops breadth of understanding and breadth of compassion. Coming in contact with such a man, we say that he has a great soul, and following out the inevitable generalization we affirm that

God is Soul, or perhaps we express the same idea in more conventional theological parlance by declaring that God is Person.

In this manner is the concept of God built up and defined. Whatever we may name Him, or by whatever words or terms we may describe Him, it is evident that we are designating by means of this verbal stopping point—namely, the word God—not a Being of another nature, regarding whom we could not possibly know anything, but our own assumption or conception of an abiding place or abode for certain definite and comprehensible mental and spiritual qualities with which we have become acquainted through their manifestation by ourselves and others.

We have not created anything nor discovered a Something or a Somebody. That which we have agreed to call God has not become by the naming of it "Him" a separate, distinct, unattached entity. The actuality that led to the defining of God in a separate, distinct way was the present intelligence, the present inspiration, the present awakening to greater possibilities, which are the common possessions and accomplishments of all men and women in the round of their vital life interests.

This actuality of individual mental and spiritual experience always remains the distinctive and important element in any genuine knowledge or understanding of God. It is both the expression and the evidence of the inherent individualism of man. It is this individualism of man which determines man's belief about God, and no belief about God really changes this inherent individuality, though conventional religion ardently claims the opposite. It is, however, consciously broadened, developed, unfolded, by the accumulating force of its own quality as revealed in its own life experience.

No finer definition of God was ever put into words than the Biblical one, God is Love. But unless this declaration is individually redefined with enlightenment and understanding, it does not help any one to free himself from the unsatisfactory God of personal and theological tradition.

Do we conceive of this Love, which is called God, as a definite entity or identity, existing self-contained and independent of my entity or identity and your entity or identity? Then we are mistaken. Such a concept can never be anything more than a belief about God. It can never be a knowledge of God Himself. Such a God would always be a theoretical God. He would never be the God who actually is Love to each one of us.

But let somebody love. Let you and me express in our living the qualities of love. Let us be loving. Behold the miracle! Love is immediately knowable. It exists. It is my love, your love. We perceive, name it, and declare that it is God.

Eliminate, if such a monstrosity were possible, all the love that you and I and the rest of mankind bring into the world by loving. What would happen to the God who is Love? He would disappear into the phantasy of a suppositional hypothesis. He would be non-existent. If there were no loving in the world, mankind would have a non-loving or an unloving God.

It follows, therefore, that unless man testifies constantly in thought and deed that the God who is Love *is* and that He *is what He is,* the God who is Love is not the living God, but a theoretical, unreal God of no actual use to anybody.

It makes no difference by what name we choose to call God, the mental and spiritual conditions under which we know Him do not change. Unless our lives make clear the

exact nature of the quality which we declare God to be, our verbal descriptions of Him and His ways are not of genuine or practical value to ourselves or anyone else.

Not one of the many definitions of God has an understandable meaning until it has been passed through the analytical and revealing test of the life experience. We may call God our Heavenly Father. We may call Him Jehovah. We may call Him Allah. We may deem Him too sacred to be called by any name. All these designations or absences of designation are of themselves meaningless, and they remain meaningless until men and women give them meanings by living genuinely interpretive lives.

All such human lives of vision and spiritual import invariably teach one great lesson to the few who are wise enough and discerning enough to learn it. This lesson is that the different names for God designate and refer to the same essential original—the everywhere present, though materially elusive, mental and spiritual qualities, which to the degree that they are made the life of mankind, or are expressed in the lives of mankind, bring forth a more intelligent, more satisfactory and more expansive human experience.

Consequently, whatever that is worth while, garnered under any and all names, is synonymous with and is indicated by the primary quality which is referred to in the Biblical statement that God is Love. It is evident, then, that if our God is Love, made knowable by the love which you and I express and not knowable in any other way, He cannot live in a somewhere-else, suppositional heavenly place. Our Heavenly Father must be where He is to be found—in the idealistic father-quality felt and expressed by all mankind, who must be in heaven themselves when they manifest this heavenly quality.

So, too, when one says that God is Mind, he cannot

mean that God is a separate Mind in another place. He must mean that the mind of man—the mind man has when he is intelligent, is really thinking, when he is himself—is the God-Mind expressed. The statement that God is Spirit cannot sensibly be held to declare that there is a different spirituality somewhere else, a spirituality to be attained after one dies. Such a peculiar notion opens a large field for the imagination to play in, but it makes practical understanding and demonstrable knowledge impossible.

The only God that is Spirit that you and I can know here and now—and probably, if not certainly, the only God that is Spirit that we shall ever know—is the God-like spirit of the present, animating, inspiring, leading ever forward through expanding vision to enlarged attainment.

The true spiritual life and the only eternal life is gained —so it seems reasonable to deduce—by consistently multiplying one's ability to be intelligent under all circumstances and conditions. This means continuous thinking instead of every now and again heedlessly responding to the suggestions of habit and personal desire. To think is really to live. Unintelligent mental proceedings are commonly called thinking, but actually they are the absence of thinking. If there were such a thing as perpetual not thinking, which of course there is not, nobody would know that there is such a condition as being alive.

To live means something more than running around on two feet, carrying on the routine of instinct and custom, responding automatically to dominant suggestion. Life is where thought is, and thought is where Mind is. Therefore he who lives a life of intelligent thinking reasonably finds and spontaneously proves that God is his Life.

What we call God is not and never can be to us a fixed and unchanging Being. He is always the immediate and

temporary defining and definitizing of our contemporaneous mental and spiritual self-consciousness. If this is still in the childish and personal stage of development, we define God in a childish and personal way. He becomes a great Potentate, a tribal King, a very personal and exclusive Deity.

A broadening vision and understanding inevitably make this concept of God untenable. The God of justice and mercy can no longer limit His justice and mercy to selected persons or selected tribes. He must be the universal Father, the universal Saviour. He must be forever separated from personal prejudices and personal feelings. He becomes, therefore, the universal principle of Love and Truth and Life, eternally to be demonstrated through the activity of intelligence, inspiration and passionate devotion to reality, but never to be known "face to face."

God is discerned through individual mental and spiritual experience and must be cognized as perception, feeling or quality, not as person or thing existing as an externalization or in an externalization. To attain any comprehensive sense of God—to understand Him—one must become intelligently aware of one's own mental and spiritual actions and reactions, analyze and classify them with scientific discrimination, extend them by logical deduction and development into a vision of the idealistic and universal.

This summary—not fixed nor dogmatic, if divine wisdom has touched the spirit of his realization, but hinting at the possibilities of the One Altogether Lovely—represents the individual's immediate knowledge and understanding of God. If, as the result of his sense of God, his life is made bigger, nobler, truer, more wholesome, more normal, simpler, sincerer, the individual presents indisputable evidence that he has knowledge and understanding of the true God.

Does this mean that "I am God" or "you are God"? There is a definite distinction between being God and being what God is. The statement, "I am God," is first of all offensive because it robs man of his own selfhood, while it blinds him to this irreparable loss by the flattery of calling him God. Is anyone, who stops to think, really interested in being God? Nothing would be more embarrassing and unpleasant.

One is vitally interested and can only be vitally interested in being himself, and from learning by being himself who and what his God actually is—in continually advancing through the medium of this inspiring discovery to further realizations of his own true selfhood as that which understands and manifests the inherently genuine and eternal in mental and spiritual quality. Any other view of man's being and function is bound to prove itself without vitalizing substance, unctuous though it may be at the moment with cloying sentimentality.

Not to be God, but to be himself, is man's normal aim and desire. Man is the eternal experimenter, and human living is the laboratory in which is being continually worked out the fascinating problem of a knowledge and understanding of the true God.

Is there one God then? What is usually meant when this question is asked is: Does everybody have or should everybody have the same God or the same concept of God, or is there one God who is or who should be satisfactory to everybody? Of course, the answer to those questions must be a hearty, whole-souled negative. The beauties and joys of infinite variety, change and possibility are too precious to be sacrificed for petty satisfaction in a notion of life patterned after the filing-case plan—mankind forever classified as thinking, acting, living and dying after the same model. Variety, not sameness, gives the flavor to

existence. Oneness, humanly conceived, is always synonymous with finiteness and limitation. Oneness from the standpoint of infinity is necessarily a speculation and a theory.

The question, Is there one God? can be intelligently considered as it applies to the individual alone, and the divine oneness or unity must be found in mental and spiritual quality, not necessarily or even usually in externalized expression. To the extent that my God or my concept of God is proved by intelligent, purposeful living to be satisfactory to me, He is my one, universal God, even though he may be anathema to you.

What is harmonious and right for one, is not necessarily harmonious and right for all. Indeed, what is today harmonious and right for me, may not be harmonious and right for me tomorrow. How is one to know what is harmonious and what is right? One never does know and never can know as a fixed, finite fact the always harmonious and the always right. Consequently eternal life is not an utterly unendurable prospect. Finding out is the everlasting problem. The everpresent necessity of being intelligent in order to find out makes life worth living.

What one believes must be continually changed by what one learns. It is always possible to change one's belief by means of more intelligent thinking, and it matters not whether that belief is about God, man or devil, about health or sickness, about wealth or poverty. Whether the belief is changed with ease or difficulty is determined, not by the nature of the belief, but by the fixity of one's personal notions and habits.

Most of us fear novelty and change. We shall sometime learn to love and respect them, for there can be no progress without them. If one is consistent in following an unfolding, growing, developing idea and ideal of life,

he is bound to be inconsistent in his human views and acts.

There is no progress except through vision, and there is no realization of the vision except through the expression of intelligence. This interplay of vision and accomplishment is true living. Regardless of what one's activity may be, he must have vision and intelligence in order to bring out the infinite possibilities of Mind and Soul.

This is continually proved in all human affairs. To be a successful business man, one must have a vision of business possibilities, a vision of growth and efficiency, and he must bring to bear intelligent thinking expressed in wise action, if he is to make his vision something more than an idle dream.

We must live to the full the life we are living, for we know no other to live. When we learn that there is another to live, we shall be able to live that. We must use to the best advantage the tools that we have in order to bring out the things of which we are capable.

The value of daily experience is inestimable, for it is through this ever-present, ever-flowing externalization that one gets a correct view of his state of belief, and can, if he is honest enough and wise enough to see his personal self as it is, correct the misconceptions of God, of Life, of Being, of Truth, which are deforming and cramping his vision and realization. Human living is wonderful and inspiring looked at and used in the right way—as a sort of mental and spiritual thermometer—but depressing and disheartening to the limit when viewed as an independent entity.

The God we have is the God we live and express. To say we have another God, does not mean a thing, because we cannot help expressing in our daily experience just what we believe God to be.

CHAPTER III

Mental Initiative and Organization

Summary: What one does is the effect of mental activity—Initiative is the characteristic mental process of the God-like man—Actions by themselves are without real quality or meaning—To promote activities is not necessarily to reproduce the mental quality that originally caused the activities—The origin of evil—Human conduct usually follows convention—Metaphysics is essentially radical—The development of an organization tends to eliminate the idea that started the organization—Organization is humanity's substitute for original thinking—Dominion is man's natural status—A perfect organization is both impossible and undesirable.

Everything that one does is the externalized effect of some sort of mental process. The mind must act before the body can move. When a thing is done for the first time, the external activity is the effect of a mental process into which there has entered the element of initiative.

Compared with an accepted standard of conduct or morals, the external activity may be good or it may be bad. The mental process may be intelligent or it may be foolish. These comparative values are extremely important where such relative matters as human customs and situations are concerned, but these relative matters are not at the present moment under consideration.

The important question from the standpoint of metaphysics always is: Has the mental process the element of initiative? It is the presence of this important element of initiative in his mental proceedings which determines the mental quality of the individual and proves his unity with Mind.

Though the thought process or mental initiative may

be inferior, judged by an accepted human standard, nevertheless the presence of mental initiative is the definite evidence of conscious mind action as distinguished from automatic response to suggestion. An initiative thought process has inherent in it the worth and dignity of individualized intelligence. As regards quality and character, it is the manifestation of individual understanding of what for convenience is called the divine Mind.

It is also the only proof one can give that he is himself. It is the presentation of identity—one's self-cognized individuality or selfhood as distinguished from his changing personal mental and physical characteristics, a step towards the realization and expression of true identity, which must of necessity be intelligence made manifest in order to be knowable. Non-intelligent or illogical and unreasonable identity could never be knowable and therefore would be a myth.

Initiative is the characteristic mental activity of the God-like man, and it provides the evidence that man is in truth the likeness—the selfhood or individualization—of Mind.

What follows this initiative thought process? In universal experience, or, to use a synonymous term, according to the law of being, there follows an externalized effect, an appearance in the realm of physical sense living and being, a happening or event in the world we believe we are in, an action or circumstance which seems to be of itself either good or bad.

The goodness or the badness of the ensuing action is usually judged, not by the quality of intelligent thinking that is responsible for it, but according to its conformity or lack of conformity to the dominant conventional beliefs of the time and place. This inferior judgment from the standpoint of appearance, instead of from that of quality

of thought activity and initiative, leads at once to one of the profound errors of the human mind—the tendency to regard the continuance and perpetuation of an external process or condition as the continuing and perpetuating of the thought activity and quality which was originally responsible for the externalization.

Especially when the action or event seems to be good, is mankind in general tempted to believe that the good is inseparably connected with the action or that there is something essentially divine linked with the event. Believing this, one naturally concludes that virtue will ensue to him and to others if the action and event are maintained and established as continually present experiences. Those so believing proceed to devote themselves—possibly with the greatest conscientiousness and zeal, with the utmost personal self-sacrifice—to perpetuating the external activity.

It is not generally recognized that devotion of this sort to an external activity betokens a complete change of mental base. The action was originally the result of a thought process which had the element of initiative, and therefore a thought process demonstrating individual identity. The mental process, which busies itself with the perpetuation of an action in the realm of sense experience, is without initiative. It is imitative. It is concerned with ways and means, with expediencies and policies.

The one who is absorbed in following a method is operating always and exclusively in that confused and confusing state of belief where the theoretical absolute, which can be only hinted at in terms of mental and spiritual quality, is foolishly conceived of as attached to the concrete phases and forms of momentary human experience.

Under the spell of the deceptive belief that an action

itself is endowed with an eternal divine quality, because it happens at the moment to be a good and wise action in the realm of sense experience, men and women rarely pause to question the accompanying suggestion that the action must be continuously carried on because of its assumed divinity. Whether they call this unquestioning devotion to certain externals their religion, or whether they act without conscious consideration of what they are doing—and this is the average human being's way—this absorption in maintaining conditions as they are, simply because that is the way they are, is their religion, their life, their all.

If one were to answer, at least in part, the question, "Where did evil come from?" it would be in these words: From the general human belief that there is divinity or reality in the action or the externalization, together with the ensuing belief that to maintain the action or the externalization is the essential business of mankind.

Although metaphysical quality gives human conduct its only genuine meaning and value, human conduct, contrary to the generally accepted theory, does not necessarily bring metaphysical concepts into conscious recognition nor accurately define them. A genuine metaphysician, having an understanding of mental and spiritual reality, will be in the nature of things a wise human being, even when he is not a conventionally approved one. A wise human being—wise, that is, in the characteristically human way as regards policies and methods—is not always (indeed rarely) a genuine metaphysician.

From its own standpoint, human conduct is extremely important. From the standpoint of metaphysics, human conduct, taken entirely by itself without reference to motive or reason or purpose, is without reliable meaning. While the give-and-take human way is to judge con-

duct by a conventional moral law, actually morals are but temporary human expedients and not a final standard of right and wrong. They have meaning as summaries of the race experience, and are indicative of the practical conclusions about human actions which have been arrived at in the progressive development of certain peoples and certain concepts of communal living.

The theory that God is the Maker of the moral law is no more sound than is the theory that God is the Creator of the material universe. As conditions of final reality, the morals of a human being and the morals of an amœba are alike in their non-essentiality.

The social and economic conventions of men and women, the political relations of nations, the organized religious systems of mankind, are important and far-reaching as humanity looks at life and living. Reality or truth, however, is not in them.

All rules and conventions of an external nature, including the Ten Commandments themselves, are concomitants of the realm of temporary belief. They are important or unimportant, not because of what they are, but because of the belief held regarding them. They will sometime be replaced by other rules and conventions, as ever unfolding intelligence finds expression in new and different activities.

Human conduct usually follows convention. Rarely is it the effect of spiritual inspiration or genuine understanding. Metaphysics, always searching for truth, is eternally radical, upsetting the conventional and the established. The effect of metaphysical radicalism is to make intelligent human beings, thus producing the changes in methods, customs and habits, which are necessary for the manifestation of an improved concept of life.

The aim of the metaphysician is to find and express the actually intelligent, the really sane, the always sound. The radicalism of the metaphysician is a constant reformer of all suppositions about intelligence, sanity and soundness. Beyond the limitations of personal desires and prejudices, his concept expands towards the realized individuality of universal divinity.

The reason why human suffering is not more effectively lessened is to be found in the unhappy conviction that mental and spiritual power is limited and illusionary. As long as the mesmeric suggestion that externalized beings and things have in themselves entity or reality, goodness or divinity, is accepted as the truth, this conviction cannot be avoided.

Mental and spiritual power is not limited, and it is not lost. It is not illusionary. It has not even been laid aside. It is constantly being used, and it constantly must be used. A convincing consciousness of its presence and availability is unfelt because of the spell of mesmeric suggestion yielded to and thereby perpetuated by mankind. The claim of limitation is believed in and seemingly experienced because of inexplicable and unaccountable superstition.

If more definitely awake to the meaning of what it knows to be the fact—that mutation and change, never immobility and sameness, are always being manifested in the material universe—mankind would have much less difficulty than now appears to be the case in expressing immediately its purposes and desires in the realm of externalized belief. It does express them now, but too often only after great labor and painful experimentation.

This is because humanity persists in believing that there is virtue and good, or lack of virtue and evil, in the externalization, and then either loves the external for its

supposed good or fears it for its supposed evil. In this false concept, human beings lose the only dominion there is, the dominion of right thinking or consistently practised mental initiative.

Man must express what he thinks in order to know what he thinks and to find out if he really thinks at all. And he must express what he thinks in some sort of externalization. The painter must make pictures. The musician must compose. The poet must write. The whole lot of us must live. All must externalize something in order to discover that they are somebody.

The problem of human living is to think with initiative in order that the resulting externalization may have purpose and meaning, not of itself, but because of the thought-quality of which it is the effect or expression. Having accomplished the externalization, it then becomes the business of mankind never to be deceived by the suggestion that the externalization and the thought-quality are inherently connected. It is not true that maintaining the thing is necessarily perpetuating the thought-quality.

It is quite clear when an author is writing a book that his mental energy is bent on initiative and creative thinking. His mind is filled with ideas, which he is striving to grasp and understand and express so that others may perceive what he perceives. Nothing is stabilized or fixed in the externalization. Revision is constantly taking place.

This is an example of vital living and being—active thinking exercising its rightful dominion over the externalization for the purpose of making the externalization conform accurately and definitely to the developing idea.

The author finishes the book. He does not exhaust the possibilities of book-writing, but he carries the exposition

of the specific idea as far as he wishes or as far as he can. The book becomes to him something accomplished.

At once he is assailed with the characteristic human temptation. Shall he go on with the idea that made him write the book, or shall he stay with the book? If he chooses the first course, he is bound to outgrow the book. If he chooses the second, he is bound to lose his perception of the expanding and developing idea and become the defender of a book instead of the revealer of unfolding truth.

The history of political and religious movements shows this as a common experience—that the growth and development of an organization have a tendency to dilute and eliminate as a vital factor the idea or ideal that originally led to starting the organization and gave meaning to its beginnings. The record of the many religious sects that have been founded from time to time for the purpose of upholding the teachings of Jesus furnishes almost countless typical instances.

Mankind has still to find out that the way to salvation lies not in unchanging externals, but on the contrary in keeping the rules, methods and beliefs connected with the external activity so fluid that they can be readily modified and continually revised so as to conform to the unfolding concept of the real and worthwhile.

At present, everything from persons to possessions is tragically over-organized. He who out of his soul would rebel, who cries out for freedom to be himself, is beset from babyhood by the doctors, the teachers, the ministers, the politicians and the bankers—the host of well-meaning caretakers and counsellors—who coax and bulldoze, cajole and frighten him, first into submission to the customary rules and regulations, then into violent partisanship of

them. With the rarest of exceptions humanity travels the road of complacent conformity from birth to death, knows no other road and wants to know no other.

The organization of everything in sight is humanity's poor substitute for the glory and the dominion of original thinking. Humanity has organized its body and everyone else's body, its world and everyone else's world. It has organized so completely that there is no room anywhere for a new idea.

So the new idea has to pry itself in, and this prying process hurts. When it hurts physically, it is called disease. When it hurts politically, it is called revolution. When it hurts socially, it is called moral degeneracy. When it hurts religiously, it is called sacrilegious heresy. When the hurt becomes unendurable, humanity does what it should have done before there was any hurt—it disorganizes and starts over afresh.

Unfortunately, mankind has always started over again with a new organization and the old state of mind. Consequently it has repeated time and again the same error, suffered the same consequences, and landed itself in the same limitations. It has not intelligently disassociated fundamental reality from the temporary externalization. When mankind does this even a very little, age-old limitations will be broken, dominating beliefs and superstitions will be eliminated, unity with creative mental force will be practically demonstrated.

Dominion is the natural status of man. To have this, the sense or conviction of fixity, substantiality and entity in the externalization must cease to be the universal habit of thought.

To gain dominion, each human being should begin breaking the bonds of mental habit at any point where he can. One may feel greatly dependent upon a certain

material environment for happiness. He can make a start towards freedom by proving that he can be happy in other environments. Another may believe that certain persons are necessary for his well-being, or the reverse of this, that certain persons make him miserable. Here is another opportunity to show one's self the master of either a personal sense of good or a personal sense of evil. These simple problems are open doors out of the bondage of conformity into the freedom of intelligent thinking.

Although the suggestion is constant that human affairs can be so regulated by rules and laws that harmony and righteousness will be automatically achieved, this cannot be done, nor is it desirable that it should be done. Metaphysical research and discovery are bound to leap ahead of organization, thus making the contemporary organization obsolete and finally destroying or forcing the revision of its specific manifestations.

If it were possible to devise a perfectly functioning organization either as a political system, a church or a physical body, the achievement would be the most disastrous of accomplishments. Progress mentally and spiritually would stop right at that point. Materialism would gain an eternal triumph.

CHAPTER IV

Man the Knower of the Truth

Summary: Ambiguities in the meaning and use of the word man —Definition and function of man—Man's sole adjustment is to the effects of his own intelligent thinking—Man is not externally governed and limited either by God or by material conditions—To the extent that man finds his true self, he finds God—The fallacy of the claim of a human and divine coincidence—Man must be considered as impersonally as one considers God—Theological concepts lose sight of the essential equality of God and man—Man is not born and does not grow from babyhood to adulthood—Man is the "I" of each and all of us, not the personal ego, but the true individuality.

In common parlance, the word man has several interchangeable meanings, and this naturally leads to ambiguities and confusion. Man is the word customarily used when the creature of animal instincts and habits, to whom the ebb and flow of material sensation is almost the whole of existence, is referred to.

It is also the word used to designate the being of idealistic aspirations and qualities, who finds the fuller and truer life in the unfoldment and satisfaction of his mental and spiritual perceptions.

Furthermore, man is used when what is meant is the apparent combination of these antagonistic and opposing instinctive and spiritual elements—the human being that each of us calls himself. In fact, this last is the common usage and the one most productive of misunderstandings.

Man, as I have tried consistently to employ the word, designates the being of spiritual and idealistic characteristics, whom our humanity usually regards as the best side of itself. His normal interest is in fundamental truth

and reality. His untrammeled intuition turns him to thought and inspiration for the genuine meaning of life and the sound analysis of its purposes and possibilities.

When referring to the "man," in whom seems to be joined both the spiritual and material tendencies, I have employed such terms as mankind, human beings, and sometimes the plurals, men and women.

Man I would define as that which is intelligent and intuitive, and therefore not susceptible to dominating suggestion, in contradistinction to that which is habitual and automatic in its response to suggestion. Man is that which perceives the genuine, the sincere and the lovely in mind and spirit, senses their manifold possibilities, and through the exercise of his unique function of creative artist makes them knowable in all phases of living and being.

Fundamental in the concept of the artist are his mental and spiritual perceptions. His genuine verities—the elements that are to him the actual truth—are his heart, mind and soul longings, idealizations and aspirations. By means of some outside medium—a book, a picture, a musical composition—he tries to embody or symbolize these inward realities. However lovely and true the resulting work of art may be, it is not and never can be the artist's original concept. At best, it is but a copy, indicating the quality and nature of the original.

The real life of man is not to be found in the things that he does in the world of materiality—the business he carries on, the money he makes, the positions of honor and trust he fills, the travelling he does over the face of the earth. Like the artist, man's real accomplishments are to be found in the nature and quality of the thinking that he does, in his spiritual attainments, in his ability to rise

above the suggestive into the perceptive, in his success in expressing himself, not as he fancies himself to be, but as he really is. If a man's outward living is only a conventionalized copy or a mechanical reproduction of an external model, he has still to learn the meaning of self-realization and individual expression.

Man is not God. He is the knower of God, or the knower of the truth. God is what man perceives, what man believes to be true, what man reveals, what man understands, what man finally proves to be the genuine substance of himself and all his works. God is that from which man is never separated, whom to comprehend and declare aright is the sole purpose of man's endeavors.

As man sustains an eternal unity with God, he also maintains an unchanging equality with his fellows. One man cannot be nearer God than another man, else one man or the other would be separated from God. The perfect equality of man is established by the demonstrable fact that he is individually both the revealer and the revelation of God. He continually looks forward to the possibility of being in the fullness of his individual selfhood the complete revealer and the perfect revelation of God.

How does man express his true being and indicate his knowledge of God? By thinking, and by making his actions the logical effects of his thinking. Is there such a thing as thinking for somebody else? No, one can think for himself only.

The purpose of man is not to manipulate external conditions but to be himself. He does this by learning how to think and what to think, by consistently exercising his growing ability to think better and more fully today than he did yesterday.

It is not always necessary nor desirable to maintain or

to change outward conditions. Conditions are not of themselves good or evil, and they should not be classified as if they were. They are personally convenient or inconvenient, personally desirable or undesirable.

To feel that one must devote himself to the preservation of certain conditions because of their supposed goodness, is quite as purposeless as to feel that he must devote himself to the destruction of other conditions because of their supposed badness. The arranging of external conditions should be incidental to man's real business of proving that intelligent thinking and wise acting give him dominion over unstable beliefs.

Thinking intelligently is the normal antecedent to living intelligently. He who thinks intelligently will hardly be debarred from living in a world that gives him a fair measure of pleasure and satisfaction. His intelligent thinking is bound sometime to lead him to the conclusion that there is nothing either of law, habit, custom or appearance in the world of externals to which he must adjust himself. He will finally become convinced that his sole adjustment is to the reason and logic of the intelligent thinking that is the law of his being.

When this mental basis is attained, there assuredly will be found very little in the world of externals that will force an adjustment on him. By the intelligent exercise of mental power, giving him enlarging dominion over the vagaries of belief, he will learn step by step that he can have what he desires, experience what he wishes, that he is free to manifest without restriction the nature and quality of his individuality.

Man is no more externally limited by God or externally governed by God than he is externally limited and governed by conditions, by things or by material law. Man's conscious, definite, individual dominion can never be sur-

rendered nor lost. If it at any point seems to be lost, this is the effect of a temporary blindness to the actual mental situation due to momentary mesmeric belief, as under mesmeric suggestion one might mistake a table for a horse.

When man is himself, he is governed by correct views of reality and being. He then has the true Mind or God-Mind. There is no other way except that of being himself by which man can be God-governed. For man to be governed by God means that man himself—by his own initiative, by his own purpose and desire, by his own self-conscious intention—is making use of intelligence. He is thinking as he should and acting as he must if he is to show himself to be intelligent—that is, he is acting with wisdom, understanding and love.

Mankind has theorized about God from all conceivable and inconceivable standpoints of belief, but mankind confessedly does not know much about God. The reason for this is that mankind does not know much about man. Mankind has believed man to be everything almost but an intelligent being, and consequently has believed God to be exactly like man, quite inexplicable, contradictory and insane. As man becomes known to himself, God will become known to man. When man finds himself, he will at the same time find God whom he expresses.

Mankind loses out in the search for man in the same way that it loses out in the search for God—by expecting to discover them both in some kind of a human and divine coincidence. The most elemental phase of this belief is the common notion that man, the creative artist or individuality who outlines his concepts in what appear to be independent material entities, is a human or mortal body with a divine or immortal soul or spirit dwelling in it. At death, this immortal soul or spirit is supposed to

escape or be released from the material body, and thereafter to spend eternity in some form of more or less personal consciousness either in a place called heaven or a place called hell or a place, which is neither heaven nor hell, called purgatory.

That man has or is an immortal soul or spirit—or, as I would prefer to express it, is eternally individual or always himself—seems a reasonable proposition. The destruction or dissolution of that which thinks and of that which is thought does not occur, as our present human experience plainly shows. We have all about us—in our own mentalities and to an extent in books and other human records—the proof of the immortality of thinkers and their thoughts.

The immortality of the changing, irrational human personality and the transitory physical body is another affair altogether. In fact, even in immediate, everyday living, both the personality and the body have a tendency to become of lesser importance and to disappear from acute mental cognizance in proportion as the individual's absorption in thought is pronounced. It is not at all unusual for one to lose for the time being all sense of a human body and a physical personality, when some abstract mental problem entirely holds his thought.

When the gas explosion takes place in the cylinders of the automobile engine, the pistons are driven as far as they can go up or down in the explosion chambers. On their return, they expel the burnt gases from the chambers. There is no moment when both the pistons and the gases occupy the same space at the same time. In like manner the coming of a human and personal concept into the mind of man, tends to drive out the immortal or divine idea of man, while the return of the divine idea expels or eliminates the human or personal concept. The

two do not and cannot occupy the mentality at the same time.

There is no human and divine coincidence, any more than there is a coincidence between darkness and light. The perception and attainment of the divine is the destruction of the human. To the extent that the human is magnified, the divine is lost sight of.

To comprehend man aright it is necessary to look at him as impersonally as one looks at God. If one is to think intelligently about man, he must cease identifying man with his own personal self or anybody else's personal self. If one regards human beings as man, or looks upon himself in any of his personal aspects as man, the perceptive and analytical faculties are sure to be darkened and imposed upon by habitual points of view. Then clear, logical deductions become impossible.

Man lives what God is. What God is, is man. Man makes known, declares, reveals, states what God is. Man continually discovers God and expresses Him. It is, therefore, as important to find out what man is as to find out what God is. In fact, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of God and man cannot be separated. Ignorance of man is the unavoidable associate of ignorance of God or Truth.

Theological concepts continually lose sight of the essential partnership and equality of God and man as cause and effect. Their tendency is to magnify God and minimize man. The fondness of theologians for likening themselves to worms is proverbial. Of course, they do not feel like worms, and they do not really believe they are worms. Indeed, the more they proclaim that they are worms, the less wormlike they believe themselves to be. They are thoughtlessly following a precedent which holds that the littler man is made to appear, the bigger God will seem by

contrast, and the more pleased God will be by this exhibition of practical relativity.

It is extraordinary that intelligent beings should so deceive themselves. To know God aright, to please Him in a way that counts for something—by revealing what He is by means of one's daily walk and conversation—is something vastly more worthy than the hypocritical and self-righteous assumption of a mock humility. It means expressing the dignity, the honesty, the sincerity, of noble, fearless, self-respecting manhood and womanhood.

All that is known about God, all that is theorized about Him, has been deduced from definite experiences in loving, thinking and being which man has had. This man is the one individualized by each of us as himself. He is our true nature and being, not our personal peculiarities and temporary beliefs.

This is another way of saying that without man as the witness, there would be no God in the evidence. God is never His own witness. You and I are always His mouthpieces. If He speaks at all, it is only when man speaks for Him. Without man who is loving, the concept of God as Love simply could not be. Without man expressing intelligence, the concept of God as Mind would be impossible. Without a living man, where would be the God who is Life?

Not only are God and man inseparable—as cause and effect, if you choose, or as Principle and idea, as original substance and active agent—but they are also equal in function and importance. To say that they are equal, does not mean that they are one and the same. They form a perfect and complete partnership and co-relationship. In Biblical language, man is "the image and likeness" of God, or "the son of God."

Is it possible to believe with seriousness that when a

human child is born an addition has been made to man, who is already the full and complete expression of God, or to the number of men whose individuality and divinity are already the here and now of truth and reality? The human child is but one of the many manifestations in the external for which mesmeric suggestion, fortified by traditional conviction, is responsible.

Immediately after he is born and started on his way out of sense mesmerism by the kindly, if vigorously administered, aid of doctor or midwife, the normal baby begins to prove that he is not a baby at all. He rapidly disappears as a baby. If he did not so disappear, the parents would be greatly chagrined and alarmed. We say that he has grown to be a child. The plain fact is that the baby is no longer there, just as the child will not be there when the man or woman appears—just as the man and woman of limited personal belief in their turn will vanish to the degree that the demonstration of true individuality is made.

If it were possible to destroy all looking-glasses and forget all the stories that have come to us from fond parents and relatives of our having been born at a certain time, in a certain place, and by a certain process—if each of us could look at himself only as he knows himself minus outside opinion and information—does a single one of us know himself as having been born or as having had a beginning? He does not.

One may go back to his first recollection. One has no sense of beginning at that point. He is definitely conscious of already being there before he can remember anything about being there. He is positive that the "I" of the first memory antedated the memory and is the same "I" that is "I" today.

Nor, without the suggestive aid of photographs, baby

clothes, and small holes in fences that one knows he used to crawl through, has one the sense of having been a little thing physically. One knows as a human fact that he was a small child, but he does not feel that once he was a small child and now he is a big man.

The "I" has no consciousness of growing from babyhood to manhood. It has, however, an extremely definite consciousness of becoming more and more aware of its own actuality. Without suggestion, there would be no consciousness of personal selfhood, no consciousness of babyhood, childhood, manhood, as differentiated states of being. Individuality, growing and becoming more and more definitely itself, would be the only consciousness.

If it were possible at this moment to remove from my consciousness and your consciousness the things that have been taught us about personal selfhood—the so-called self of birth and prospective death—and the habits and sentiments that have been formed and felt through accepting and believing these traditional suggestions, one literally would not know anything about a personal selfhood. If he were, at the same time, awake to genuine thought activity, he would be expressing his individuality here and now without the belief of either a beginning or an ending.

The "I" of ourselves has been unchanged in our uninfluenced perception of it. It has never had a beginning in our consciousness. How can it ever have an ending as far as we are concerned? It assuredly never can. Death is a personal fear—never an individual experience.

When man is defined as the full and complete expression of God—that which lives all the life that is lived, loves all the love that is loved, knows all the truth that there is to be known—the natural question is, Who is this man? The answer is, from the individuality of all mankind, "I am this man." This man is "I."

When I declare that I am this man, do I mean that somebody else is deprived of being man, or that all men are one and the same man? I do not, for I recognize that such questions are asked from the standpoint of personal limitation and finiteness. Limitation and finiteness argue that if I were to live all the life, love all the love, know all the truth, I should either absorb it all into myself and leave nothing for anyone else, or I should be just the same as everyone else—like candles poured into the same mould.

Actually, however, to live is not to encompass but to expand, to love is not to absorb but to radiate, to know is not to hoard but to express. The more definitely "I" finds itself the man of God's creating, the more expansive and universal it is in its perception and understanding that not "I" alone, but all men, identify as their true selfhood, through individual realization and manifestation, the infinite quality of the divine.

Similarity and conformity have no meaning in this process of individual perception and expression. Unity is found not in likeness of effect, but in love of the truth, in honesty of purpose, in sincerity of motive.

Given a Beethoven symphony, ten different conductors and ten different orchestras, would one expect ten performances just alike? He would look for certain similarities,—the same notes, the same time, the same quality of tone in the different instruments,—but he would get ten performances fundamentally and inherently different due to the varying concepts of conductors and orchestras. Yet all would be true to the original. No one would necessarily be better or worse than another. They all would blend into a fuller comprehension and expression of the master composition. Indeed, no two conductors could give exactly the same reading and be, each one, true to himself.

So I give through all eternity my individual presentation of the true and the real, and you give yours. Both may be equally genuine, equally complete, equally satisfying, equally comprehensive, but they can never be the same.

Man—the concept of individuality with which we have been dealing, not the being of flesh, blood and bones—is just as much an ideal as God is, and unless he is made a reality through the channel of being, will remain just as theoretical as God is. The personal ego is no more man than it is God.

To feel big personally and to regard one's self as of great importance because man looms so large in the divine economy, is to be absurdly blind to one's present mental and spiritual distance from the idealistic perceptions and intuitions, inspirations and awakened sensibilities, which characterize the man of idealism and truth.

The inflated personal ego is in its every aspect the opposite of true selfhood, whose inherent intelligence and love are expressed in a fine and ennobling humility, in a delicate and penetrating regard for the proportions, an impressive and natural detachment from personal prejudices and purposes as of transitory and relative importance, in an unfailing sense of humor when brought in touch with humanity's foibles, whether frivolous or serious.

CHAPTER V

Dominion Through Individuality

Summary: Primitive mentality cannot conceive of dominion as possible—It regards environment as all-powerful—A good fate instead of a bad one the best it has to offer—Life is not a condition but a state of mind—To accept domination as necessary, is to be dominated—To refuse to accept domination as a necessity, is to take the first step towards freedom—The man of personal sense is no more knowable than the God of personal sense—Individuality and personality differentiated and defined—Man can have but one individuality while he may seem to have a myriad of personalities—The attainment of individuality is the destruction of personality—Individuality is not gained by being born and it will not be lost by dying—Man is free to find and express his essential nature and individuality.

To the primitive mentality—thinking in pictures and unable to project thought beyond the familiarities of elemental sense experience—the external world is the universe of basic reality, of fundamental cause, of ultimate investigation. It is the creation by some mysterious and magical process of God, who is always a magnified human being—a tribal Potentate, a Ruler, a King—whose methods are extraordinary, but whose power is of the usual human sort and whose ways are markedly human in intent.

In this mysteriously created universe, under the domination of this mighty Personal Being, live myriads of other personal beings—such is the general modern religious belief, Christian or so-called pagan—who are called men and women—or generically, mankind. They have a sort of likeness to this God, whether exclusively in characteristics or partly in appearance there is no sure agreement,

but they have none of His power nor dignity. They perhaps have a spark of His so-called divinity—at least under certain conditions—because of which they may become the objects of His beneficence and the eternal recipients of His favor and bounty, but always—mark this—under the control of His arbitrary will and as a mark of His special favor.

Primitive mentality, modern or ancient, cannot conceive of dominion as possible for man. Primitive mentality always reasons from the assumption that an external cause has produced the internal effect. Relying entirely on the testimony of material sense, it visualizes an omnipotent environment—the mighty forces of what it calls nature and natural law—the meaning of which it cannot fathom, the quality of which it completely misunderstands and misinterprets.

The best that primitive mentality can perceive as an idealistic possibility is a good fate instead of a bad one, a benevolent ruler instead of a malevolent one, the easy bonds of pleasant success instead of the hard ones of bitter adversity. But it cannot offer the one boon which the heart and soul of mankind craves more than any other. It cannot offer dominion, for it cannot conceive of dominion as a possibility.

If man is the personally created and the personally governed of a Personal Being called God, or if he is—to grasp the other horn of the dilemma—the product of his environment, the automatically evolved result of mechanistic processes, dominion is indeed a chimera, fate is a fact, escape is an impossibility, sensuality (refined or otherwise) is the best to be hoped for. As regards the domination of man by God or Nature, theist of the conventional type and atheist are in accord, and to man himself it makes no difference in a last analysis whether he surren-

ders to a dominating Person or a dominating Nature or a dominating System. In any case, it is a choice of masters. The effect is the absence of the one thing that counts —the freedom to be himself.

Life is not a condition—it is a state of mind. It is literally true that "as a man thinketh in his heart so is he," though what he thinks in his heart, man unfortunately is profoundly ignorant of. To accept domination as a real, necessary or true condition, is to be dominated, and domination in a pleasant way, it should be emphasized, is as much domination as domination in an unpleasant way. In the end, domination of the pleasant sort leads to as direful consequences as does domination of the unpleasant sort. On the other hand, to refuse to accept domination as a necessity is to take the first step towards freedom from domination.

This first step is by no means an easy one. It has nothing in common with defiance, rebellion or license. It may or may not be immediately expressed in outward acts. The first step means the arrival on new mental ground. It means looking at the problem of life as solvable instead of as possibly avoidable. It means acceptance of the task of solution with vigor and joy, and with all this, it means the acquisition of that lovely union of dignity and humility which banishes forever the cheap and vulgar assertiveness and aggressiveness of pride-possessed and fear-obsessed human beings. The point of personal egotism around which cluster, like steel filings around a magnet, the ages' accumulation of prejudice, custom and tradition must be sacrificed. The inflated ego of personal sense, dwelling in a realm of comparison and competition, can neither possess nor exercise dominion.

In fact, the so-called man of personal sense is no more knowable as a reality than is the so-called God of personal

sense. The man who is externalized—and he must be externalized as myself or yourself in order to be cognized by the personal senses—can no more be taken out of the realm of theory and belief than can the God who is externalized.

God is found in the mental and spiritual life-experience, and that which finds Him is man, who is the unit of mental and spiritual life experience—a unit in the sense of individual completeness, not in the sense of one of a series.

It is necessary—and therefore it is quite possible and reasonable—to make a definite distinction between individuality and personality for the purpose of getting at the difference between the man of reality and freedom and the man of infatuation and bondage.

Individuality is the eternal "isness" of true selfhood. It is never a positive accomplishment nor a finished product, always an enlarging possibility and a fresh discovery. Yet individuality is ever a definite entity as quality. It cannot be conceived of as one quality today and a different quality tomorrow. It has its own peculiar and particular flavor which it imparts to all its manifestations, while none of these manifestations either limits or changes its characteristic aspect.

One can conceive of individuality as more fully and accurately defining itself, as unfolding, enlarging, becoming, as it were, more and more itself as a self-conscious entity in the life-experience; but one cannot conceive of individuality being different from itself, losing its definite quality, changing its unique flavor. The unchangeableness of individuality, however, is not the unchangeableness of limitation but the unchangeableness of quality, which requires unlimited opportunities for the discovery and expression of its essential nature.

Personality is commonly regarded as a synonym for individuality, notwithstanding that it is also commonly

used to define appearance and impression in contrast with or differentiated from actual character or nature.

The personality of an actor on the stage, though sometimes confounded in the thought of the audience with the character and quality of the human being who is acting, has actually nothing to do with them. A captivating stage presence may go with a most uninteresting and unattractive human being, and this condition may be reversed. Interesting and attractive human beings oftentimes are quite without compelling personality under the conditions of the theatre which make the actor's personality so delightfully impressive.

What the appearance of a man may be at a specific moment in his temporary sense experience, is by no means necessarily like what he is in his normal character and nature. The appearance and the true character may be momentarily alike or they may be momentarily different, but they are never one and the same.

Individuality is what man actually is—his definite identity. Personality is the human being's belief about himself and the beliefs of others about him.

Man can have but one individuality, which, however, has infinite possibilities of development and experience. A human being may seem to have a myriad of personalities, each one believed to be himself by himself and others, but all of them fleeting fancies and inconsequential adaptations to the dominant suggestion of the moment.

Personality is without continuity. It is one thing in one experience, another thing in another experience. It is the great impersonation, the great putting-on. Sometimes it is fairly honest personality; at other times it is without a vestige of sincerity. It is white light, red light, blue light—all things to all men, and all things to all circumstances.

There is neither coordination nor correspondence between individuality and personality. They are exact opposites in quality. The attainment of individuality is the destruction of personality. The inflation of personality is the temporary loss of individuality in the realm of human experience.

Therefore, we classify individuality under the eternal and real, personality under the temporary and unreal. Individuality we call true, personality we declare false, unreliable and deceptive, a belief about man but never man himself.

How does this apply to the you and me of today? Is it not plain that when one permits himself under any form of mesmeric suggestion to express personality, he at that point loses his individuality or essential quality? He becomes the fly-by-night of personal sense. He is not himself; he is not anything. You cannot put your finger on him. He is without principle. He is concerned with policies and adaptations. Like the lucky bug of the fresh water pond, when you grab for him, he is not there.

One cannot be two opposites at the same time. Therefore at any given moment, one must be either individual or personal; he cannot be both individual and personal.

If he is being individual, he is himself; he is expressing intelligence, is being governed by intelligence, is manifesting his identity, is living the eternal reality of being. He has dominion.

The infinite cannot be divided; it is inherently and indivisibly one. To touch it at one point, is to touch it at all points. Limited human belief does not perceive this, but the metaphysical truth is not changed by the limitations of momentary personal belief.

To be individual, then, even for the flash of an instant, is to find one's self, to know one's self, to be one's self, in

the forever of mental and spiritual reality and infinitude. No one has to attain individuality, his immortal selfhood, but he does have to be it as a consistent, conscious experience.

There is not coming in the by-and-by a time when one will automatically become an immortal. One cannot become something different from what he is. If he is not an immortal now, he never will become one. Unless he knows that he is an immortal now, he never will know that he is one.

It will be perceived that the vexing questions, based on a sense of the identity or correspondence of individuality and personality, such questions as when will the human cease and the divine appear, when will mortals become immortals, when will the human belief about man disappear and the man of God's creating appear, when does the human child begin to express individuality—in short, when does human belief develop into divine reality, and personality change into individuality—all such questions are meaningless and unanswerable.

Personality never does develop into individuality. A mortal never does become an immortal. The human child never does become something, but consistently demonstrates his nothingness by disappearing in proportion to the appearing of a better belief, the more individualized and intelligent belief called an adult.

The expression of individuality is always the destruction of personality. To be immortal is to cease to be mortal. We shall get over fear of the death-process to the extent that we see what it is—like birth a characteristic human performance, and like birth without effect upon individuality.

Inasmuch as individuality is not gained by being born, it certainly cannot be lost by dying. Death and birth are

entirely personal affairs. To come into any one of the multiple and contrary beliefs of personality is all there is to human birth; to pass out of any one of these beliefs of personality is all there is to death.

Actually, the human self is being continually born, and is continually dying. But in all these vagaries, individuality is untouched and unchanged. It pursues the normal path of its eternal unfoldment. Its ultimate ideal is ever the realization in the life-experience of omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence.

The reason that mankind cannot conceive of dominion as a possibility—genuine, complete dominion, not a counterfeit condition of easy enslavement and pleasant servitude—is because, yielding so persistently to the mesmerism and suggestions of purely animal existence, it has been blinded to both the fact and the proof of individuality.

To all intents and purposes one dog is like every other dog. Superficially we have collies and Boston terriers, Great Danes and King Charles spaniels, but there is little real difference between them. All are dog, the unresisting victims of dog instincts, dog habits, dog limitations. To be sure, you and I distinguish in a way between the characters and personal natures of my Jerry and your Rover, but it would be quite difficult to determine how many of these peculiarities are inherent in my Jerry and your Rover and how much they represent "me" and "you" automatically impressed upon and accepted by my Jerry and your Rover as their own.

In a word, individuality is not a dog-quality. It is not an animal-quality. It is not a mankind-quality either, so long as mankind continues under the mass mesmerism and the instinctive suggestion that is inherent in dog and animal existence. It never occurs to the dog to question

the domination of environment, of sense experience, of habit and custom. The bondage of the dog to these is complete, and always will be complete because there is nothing in the dog nature to challenge it.

Mankind has been more elaborate than the dog in decorating its environment and idealizing its fate, but mankind does not instinctively challenge their domination any more definitely than does the dog. Therefore, until the actuality of individuality, as contrasted with personality, dawns on them, the bondage of human beings is as complete and on the same plane as that of dogs. Over personal man, as over personal dog, the inexorable sentence of "dust to dust" is pronounced, and by both is accepted with conviction of its fateful necessity.

To conceive of dominion—and to conceive of it is an essential preliminary to demonstrating it—*I* must boldly step forth from the mass mesmerism, which holds mankind so completely under the domination of fear and fate, into the being of myself as essential individuality, capable of thinking for myself and coming to just, reasonable conclusions, which may be quite different from and even directly opposed to customary beliefs, suppositions, speculations and convictions.

I must be content to find myself at variance with my fellows on points that seem vital to them and not at all vital to me. *I* must swallow the chagrin of finding them not at all impressed by other points that are immeasurably important to me. Finally, *I* must accept the humiliation of facing down God Himself until He, in His traditional aspects, is no more than a pinprick of superstition and delusion—as theatrical and unreal, as inartistic and crude, as the *Deus ex machina* of a typical Drury Lane melodrama.

What remains after the cataclysm? *I* remain, and *I*

remain free—with the dominion, if I make intelligent use of the law of life, the facts of truth, the reality of love, to fashion and present in the realm of external manifestation the beauties and the vagaries of my individual conceiving and conscientious striving—with the ability and the power to be what *I* am, an artist in living, master of my materials and not mastered by them—free to find and express my essential nature and quality in the infinitude of the real—free to glorify God by being myself.

CHAPTER VI

The Problem of Salvation

Summary: Salvation is a matter of conviction and confidence, not a question for theological speculation—Mankind cannot perceive nor state the absolute—Revelation has meaning only to the one who has it—It is comprehended by another to the extent that he has a similar revelatory experience—Standpoint from which truth may be regarded as unchangeable—The belief about God subject to constant revision—The tendency of human beings to cling to accustomed beliefs—The worth of accepting full responsibility for one's salvation —Personal responsibility contrasted with genuine responsibility—Difference between unity and conformity—Two standpoints from which the problem of being is viewed.

The problem of salvation is not the problem of how to please a somewhat whimsical, somewhat ironical, and somewhat autocratic external Deity, and, if one succeeds, attaining or being granted as a reward a place of safety in which to stay through eternity. Salvation is always contemporaneous. It is a present mental attitude or state, which the individual man or woman has. To possess and express a sane, wholesome, normal, reasonable, active, broad, visioning but not visionary state of mind is to be saved. Salvation is a *now* condition of spiritual well-being, of balanced mentality, of potential self-dominion.

Salvation is a matter of consciousness. Therefore it is not a theological problem and a matter of speculation. Salvation is the every-day, every-hour, every-minute practical concern of all humanity. It does not have exclusively to do with one's soul. It is quite as important for one's body, eminently so for one's mind and spirit. Salvation emphatically is not a future state to be gained

by the few who are fortunate enough to hit upon the particular method or process that secures it. It is certain that if one does not find his salvation in the everpresent Now, he will never find it.

Salvation is not dependent upon what one believes. Belief is of as little use to the one seeking salvation as a rope of sand would be to a sailor. Salvation is a matter of sound conviction and reliable confidence. He who has them, and can prove their soundness and reliability by the life he lives, does not wait for a future salvation. He is already saved, not because he has attained a prescribed condition of absolute sanctity or complete understanding, but because he possesses a vital perception of worthwhileness and reality, consistently enlarging through his contact with various phases of the life experience.

Mankind—the thinkers to a degree as well as those controlled mostly by emotion or personal egotism—is always trying to discover and express what it would fain believe to be absolute truth, or at least an approach to absolute truth. The absolute, of course, cannot actually be anything but a theory, which clearer understanding is always showing to be either false or inadequate. The suppositional infinitude of the absolute, its unfathomable range of myriad possibilities, place it beyond or rather outside the conception and statement of mankind, which so absorbingly looks to the five physical senses for knowledge and verification of the truth.

If mankind can neither comprehend nor prove exactly or even satisfactorily what the absolute is, certainly perception or understanding of absolute truth cannot be necessary for salvation. All of mankind's perceptions, all of its statements and all of its experiences are inherently and irredeemably relative. Therefore, the joy of experimentation and discovery is likely to be everlasting.

To know the absolute would be to encompass it mentally and reduce it to an immediately comprehensible definition or experience. Thus reduced, the absolute would be specific and limited, and therefore bound in time to be outgrown as is every human definition and experience. Then "the absolute"—in other words, the final, the eternal fulfillment—would prove to be the relative and not the absolute at all. This is exactly what has happened and will happen to every claim of either scientific or religious absolutism.

Fresh discoveries in the unfoldment of scientific and religious truth always come first to some individual, who has especially prepared himself to perceive them. In the instances where purely scientific discoveries of a material nature are concerned, this condition of individual preparation is readily seen and acknowledged. In that field it is recognized that usually the discoverer finds what he does because he has devoted himself to a particular line of study and investigation, and thus intelligently prepared himself for the exercise of the keener perceptive faculties, which enable their possessor to penetrate the veil of customary human limitation.

When it comes to discoveries in the realm of spiritual reality, this condition of individual preparation, though quite as necessary and quite as consistently present, is commonly overlooked and lost sight of. The discovery of spiritual truth is almost universally regarded by human beings as a special revelation from a superior Being to a peculiarly endowed personality. Intelligent, intentional preparation for revelation is given a second place, when it is given any place at all.

As a result of this misapprehension of the psychological fact and consequent mistaken view of the actual human situation, both the revelation and the one supposed to

have received it take on an atmosphere of sacredness and holiness. The immediate effect of this is to stultify the reasoning powers and mystify the normal, sane judgment of those who look upon the revelation as the direct word of God and the revealer as the especially favored of God.

It is under these circumstances that the delusion that certain human concepts are the absolute truth, or the belief that a human being can know the absolute truth, seizes the mentalities of men and women, and temporarily checks their progress towards a fuller comprehension of the realities of life. The man or woman who is convinced that he already knows all there is for him to know, who feels that it is not additional discoveries in the line of truth that he needs but only greater facility in the use of what he believes to be the whole of truth, has none of the open-mindedness and wholesome curiosity essential for growth in the perception, understanding and realization of forever unfolding spiritual reality.

Those who talk so glibly of "the absolute" indicate thereby, not that they know anything about the absolute, but that they personally have accepted as finally and completely true the particular belief or theory, which for the moment represents the limit of their own perceptive and analytical faculties.

Spiritual reality cannot be defined in hard and fast terms any more than the absolute can be so defined. I am, of course, using the word reality in a metaphysical sense and applying it to sane, wholesome and intelligent mental states. By spiritual reality is meant that ever-present mental and spiritual essence, motive, purpose, point of view, inherent concept, which gives meaning and color to external happenings and experiences in the realm of physical sense perceptions.

This inner light or attitude, this revelatory gleam or

flash, is often keenly real and satisfying to every one of us as his own perception or inmost feeling. But it is always an individual experience. It has meaning only to one's self. One talks around it and about it. He tries to portray it and convey it by metaphor and parable. He attempts to picture in all sorts of ways what he perceives and how he feels.

All his efforts are blind and vague, meaningless and without conviction to another, unless that one, too, has experienced a similar inner light or revelation and gained a similar attitude or perception. By these alone can he comprehend what the first communicator is striving to make known. Without this mutual though vividly individual illumination, by means of which is made possible a better understanding of both humanity and divinity, the life experience would have no more possibilities of development and no more inspiring meanings than have the actions of an automaton chess-player.

Unknowable though the absolute is, there is, nevertheless, a certain quality of unchangeableness, inherent in the truth, which is experienced here and now. An honest man, for example,—and every man is honest at some points,—never has to change the essential quality of his honesty, though he may completely revolutionize many times the ways and means by which his temporary sense of honest human living declares itself. He is bound by the necessity of growth and development, by the fact of progress, to find his quality of honesty expanding into various concepts and manifestations, which at previous points of mental and spiritual attainment were unknown or even denied by him.

Consequently, without committing the absurdity of trying to tell what the absolute truth is, one may logically and legitimately come to the conclusion that the truth al-

ways has been and always is the same truth, and he may reasonably deduce that it will continue to be the same truth that it now is and always has been.

Each of us has at the moment a certain belief about the truth, a belief, however advanced it may seem, which is only a stage in the line of infinite development. Again I am referring to a metaphysical concept or point of view, not to any finite human condition in external experience. It is self-evident that no human view of the truth can be permanent or complete. In order to advance mentally to the position of a better or higher or enlarged perception of the truth, humanity must always be open to new ideas and must constantly modify and revise its immediate belief about the truth in order to receive the advanced concept.

In thus attaining a fuller understanding, we do not lose the truth, however much we may change the belief we have had about the truth. We recognize that by this process of revision the truth has been a little freed from our misconceptions regarding the truth.

There is never anything final in what one does, says or feels humanly, regardless of how necessary what he does, says or feels may seem to be in the environment to which he is accustomed or to the personalities with whom he is associated. If wise, we are learning from every day's lesson—either through intelligent thinking or by bitter experience—that one must continually abandon even the most cherished and seemingly most essential and desirable human beliefs under the demands of progressive development. The penalty for not doing so is enslavement to such tyrants as limitation, sickness and death.

The most important and far-reaching belief subjected to this constant revision and change is the belief about God. Mankind would convince itself that it knows God

aright. Mankind also counts it a virtue to cling to the belief about God that it has. Yet, if God is infinite and eternal, how can one know God aright unless he is continually knowing God differently?

To do this requires putting into operation the best intelligence, and living the truest life, that one is capable of at the moment. Honest purpose—that genuineness which is the outgrowth of self-knowledge and earnest desire—brings the unfolding knowledge of God to the individual, an unfoldment, however, which must be expressed to be of any account.

If God works His wonders to perform, we shall not know it unless we make their performance an individual manifestation. To believe that some supernatural Being called God performs them for us out of His independent volition, is to step out of stalwart, conscious, intelligent freedom and power into the mazes of mesmeric self-deception and self-satisfaction. Deceived one's self by pseudo-religious glamor, the next inevitable step is to deceive others by means of characteristically dogmatic theological concepts and beliefs.

It is unfortunately true that the human mind persistently clings to popular religious misconceptions with a sense of great satisfaction. Human beings refuse to recognize the absurdity and unreliableness of the theological beliefs to which they are accustomed, because they enjoy so much the sentimental feeling that goes with expressing an approved attitude towards things that are deemed sacred. They also like to believe that there is a mighty personal Being who is taking care of them and assuming the responsibility for their salvation. They want to feel that if they are failing to get along as they would like, they can go into a lachrymosal emotional state, make this

marvellous Being feel sorry for them and be good to them.

Facing the plain necessity, not of praying to God for salvation but of being God-like in mind and character as the proof of salvation, why should anyone hesitate to sacrifice or be unwilling to sacrifice a deceptive and only superficially comfortable sense of being the especially cared for by an all-powerful Heavenly Ruler or King? Why should one mourn because he has lost a vanity-gratifying and gratified God? Facing such a loss, is there placed upon him a responsibility from which he shrinks?

Stepping apart from the influence of the conventionalized piety and sanctimoniousness which gather about all churchly views, looking at human experience honestly, dispassionately and unsentimentally, can a genuinely religious or God-like life be lived without independent thinking and individual conviction, without the unconventionality and moral courage that shatter the dogmas and creeds of established ecclesiastical authority and tradition?

Men and women too easily let the control of their most important mental and spiritual prerogatives pass from them to those who are more willing than they to exercise initiative. The effects of yielding to this unworthy temptation are the loss of moral courage and spiritual independence—in extreme instances, the advent of mental, moral and even physical degeneracy. Any belief, which tends to produce passiveness, negativism and complacency, is debilitating. To regard this belief as a knowledge of the true God, or in accord with the will of God, magnifies its debilitating nature.

To lose such a belief, is to find the freedom and the incentive to make the most of one's self, and to realize in

fuller measure the beauty and glory of one's individual quality. Of course, this means the acceptance of the full responsibility for one's development and salvation. To do this is to be really religious and to begin actually to live a God-like or holy life.

There are two kinds of responsibility. There is personal responsibility with its accompaniments of worry and fear regarding one's power to cope with the problems of life, and of rebellion and resentment because one has the problems to meet. There is the buoyant responsibility of conscious efficiency and strength, of moral courage and high resolve, of far-reaching interest in the solution of the life problem and in doing a man's work towards achieving the solution.

Personal responsibility makes cowards and quitters of us all. Genuine responsibility finds joy and inspiration in overcoming that which has never been overcome, in meeting difficulties even though they test the mental and spiritual resources to the utmost.

Under the mental scourge of personal responsibility, one continually and anxiously asks, "What shall I do to be saved?" He is concerned only with actions and has faith only in actions. If of a conventionally religious mind, he is readily convinced that the act of reading the Bible, the act of going to church—or if of a conventionally irreligious mind, that the reverse of these, the act of not reading the Bible and of not going to church—indeed, any other act or its negation, foolish or wise, commonplace or extraordinary, is the prime essential for immediate happiness or future salvation.

Not only does he hold these as the divine obligations placed upon himself, but he must also for his complete satisfaction hold them as the divine obligations placed on all mankind. Personal responsibility, therefore, is the

breeder of bigotry, intolerance, persecution and unprogressiveness.

Genuine responsibility produces the opposite mental conditions. Imbued with this, one's vital interest is in the mental and spiritual elements or qualities, which alone give a meaning or purpose to outward acts. Not what to do in external action, but what to be in inward feeling, perception and realization, is the important consideration.

New light, fresh impulse, enlarged vision, the absorbing pursuit of broadening concepts of the worthwhile in the realm of ideas, cannot fail to bring a fuller and more sympathetic understanding of the human problem, a heart and soul in touch with the universal in longing and aspiration, without loss of individual clarity and definiteness so necessary for practical everyday living. Thus true responsibility makes bigotry and intolerance impossible by showing forth their inherent absurdity.

Although human beings are forever confusing conformity with unity, actually there is no connection between them. Unity is the co-relationship of mental qualities. Conformity is similarity in external activities. Honesty, sincerity, intelligence, broadmindedness, sympathetic understanding, produce unity, though there may be the widest variance as regards human opinion and belief, habit and custom.

There is nothing in the essential nature of unity to prevent the Christian and the Mohammedan from being in perfect harmony. But most Christians and most Mohammedans are so unwise that they demand conformity each to the other's particular personal religious beliefs.

Unity destroys narrowness and intolerance, because it values truth and reality. Conformity, on the other hand, demands the appearance of agreement through a similar-

ity of words and actions. It regards externals as of primary importance, the spiritual point of view and the mental quality as of little or no account in comparison.

Unity is a matter of mind and heart, of the character, purpose and fundamental ideal. Like motives promote unity, but they are not always expressed in like actions. The inward feeling or motive partakes more definitely of the universal, of mankind's common heritage of aspiration, inspiration and perception, while the external action is usually the outcome of training in traditional beliefs and customs.

Conformity is the promoter and upholder of bigotry and intolerance, and therefore the destroyer of truth and reality in the concept of those who come under its spell. When it is demanded that in order to be united two or more persons must not only find a common ground of mental and spiritual integrity, but must also talk alike, write alike and act alike, there are quickly evolved restrictive communistic bodies imbued with self-righteousness and intellectual egotism. False standards of conduct are set up. Acts assume unwarranted importance. The appearance of things is overemphasized. A premium is placed on hypocrisy and dissimulation. Narrowmindedness becomes rampant and even masquerades in the garments of divine inspiration. True unity is entirely banished.

Progress is possible only as the individual's right to think for himself, and to prove the rightness or wrongness of his mental processes and conclusions in his daily experience, is fully and freely granted, so far as it is possible to do so in the present stage of human development.

If the unity of mankind is to be genuinely promoted, it must be done, not by mistaken efforts to bring all under the same religious or political banner—whether Christian

or Mohammedan or Buddhistic, whether monarchial, republican or soviet matters not—but by developing the common integrity of mind and spirit which belongs to all humanity without regard to religious or political beliefs.

Men, who have honesty as a common starting-point, sincerity as a compass, the love of the truth as a guide, intelligence as a sound staff on which to lean, are in unity, though they may differ widely in religious and political concepts and in the customs and traditions of human living. They are seekers for the truth by whatever name they call it. If they would cease trying to proselyte each other and make a business of understanding each other, they would the more quickly find this out and be captivated with the infinite variety of the right idea. Unity is never synonymous with sameness. Unity is like a diamond—the more facets it has, the more brilliant its light and sparkle.

All questions—every experience, past, present or expected—must be viewed from two standpoints—from that of its meaning and value as a factor or element in the subjective life, and from that of its practical worth in the daily events of objective living. In general, mankind divides itself fairly cleanly on two points of view—into dreamers and doers. Occasionally some individual unites in himself the two points of view. He is both a dreamer and a doer. Of such are the great artists—some painters, some writers, some preachers, a very, very few even warriors and business men, and still fewer just livers—those geniuses who do not write nor fight, paint nor accumulate, whose day-by-day lives are themselves the exemplification of a fine art.

More and more we shall find that in clarifying our concept of true living and trying to realize it practically in everyday experience, we acquire the characteristic atti-

tude of the artist, whose guide to expression is the feeling and perception of beauty and truth within himself. Quality of inspiration—a cultivated and discriminating taste as regards perceptions, intuitions and feelings (or reactions, to use the popular word)—will gradually become to us a dependable guide in our doings and sayings and outlooks on life, just as it is the artist's final arbiter as regards beauty and truth. The artistic conscience will be found to be a sounder detecter of the base and unworthy than is the moral conscience, whose guide is habit, tradition and custom.

The sane and intelligent religionist, desiring truth, seeking truth, open to truth, trying to grasp the universal in law and in mental and spiritual quality, develops in the being of himself—like the trained critic of music—a certain point of view, a certain receptive and perceptive faculty, a certain light and vision, very difficult to describe in words but emphatically knowable.

Obviously he does not find the universal in law operative in the limiting rules and regulations which hedge about external perceptions and experiences; nor cooperating whole-souledly with these limiting rules and regulations is he likely to acquire any notable mental and spiritual quality. The universal in law is revealed through such individual and progressive mind-activity as proves itself to be in accord with the persistent unfoldment of truth and reality—a process or experience both depending upon mental and spiritual quality and clarifying mental and spiritual quality.

Having vision and inspiration, there still remains the task of expressing them—by living them, by manifesting them artistically and tastefully in sound, color and outline. The true religionist is like the painter who, looking at a landscape, has a perception or vision of beauty. An

ideal is born. He enjoys it thoroughly. He is enthused and possessed by it. But the fullness of his satisfaction comes in transferring the inner perception to canvas so that others may see through the ordinary eyes something of what he has seen with the mind's eye.

The painter finds that getting the inner vision is one thing and presenting it in a satisfactory manner as a painting on canvas is another thing. Faults and inadequacies in the vision are revealed by the effort to express the vision in the painting—errors which the painter never would have discovered if he had not painted. The painter must paint for two reasons—in order to understand his vision and in order to make his vision understandable.

A dreamer is only half a man. He proves this constantly by his failure to accomplish anything. It is also true that a doer is only half a man. But it is not so easy to see this, for often the doer seems to be accomplishing a great deal. He fools himself by his show of outward activity, and he fools almost everyone else as well. Only those who are learning through the refining of their perceptive faculties—through the cultivation of a fine taste in living—to match quality with quality can see through the fraud and sham.

When Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth," he assuredly did not mean blessed are the human door-mats. He did not mean blessed are those who uncomplainingly and unresistingly lie down and allow themselves to be walked over—who do not rise against injustice and tyranny. It is as plain as anything can be that such never inherit the earth, nor is it likely that their hope of heaven is in the least justifiable. One reason for this is that such abasement is an offence against the loveliness of life. It is a thoroughly inartistic per-

formance. Abasement is never beautiful, and therefore it is never right.

Jesus must have meant something quite different from anything so unlovely—perhaps this: Blessed are those who are so free from personal prejudice, personal desire and personal deception that they constantly clarify thought and purpose by means of experience, and thereby become knowers of themselves and true artists in living. They learn to be the rulers of their own spirit and masters in the manifestation of their individual possibilities.

They inherit the earth by exercising an enlarged dominion over the limitations on individual attainment accepted as legitimate by the general run of mankind. They are the undeceived religionists, whose salvation is not an expectancy of a doubtful future reward for present thoughtless and stupid conformity, but whose salvation is here and now demonstrated by what they are.

CHAPTER VII

The Real and the Apparent

Summary: Apparentness and reality are not synonyms—It is important to man's welfare that the ability to distinguish between the two be developed—Many apparent limitations have been proved to be not real limitations—Reality cannot be found in external conditions—The point of view makes a condition seem real or unreal—The unreality of mistakes and the impossibility of learning where mistakes come from—Understanding of the truth, not material sense testimony, is the important element in discriminating between reality and apparentness—Various aspects of the problem of dealing with the testimony of the material senses.

It is not necessary to argue at any length that apparentness and reality are not synonyms. Apparentness is what seems to be; reality is what actually is. A simple illustration of this is the setting sun. The apparentness is that the sun is sinking behind the hills. The reality—a relative reality, of course—is that the sun is stationary while the earth is in motion.

Another illustration is the deception of the conjurer, who with his "the hand is quicker than the eye" apparently picks gold pieces out of the small boy's hair, eyes and ears, while really he does nothing of the sort. The mirage in the desert is apparent to all who view it, but only those believe it to be real who are inexperienced in desert travel or unacquainted with the particular locality.

The last illustration indicates in a specific way how important it is to mankind's welfare, happiness and safety that accurate distinction be made between what is apparent and what is real. The ignorant traveller, seeing the

mirage and believing it to be real, is in the greatest danger of losing his way and possibly perishing from hunger and thirst. The informed traveller, seeing the same phenomenon, but knowing it to be an appearance without reality, is in no danger at all. Indeed, the mirage is to him a pleasing and interesting spectacle.

As mankind has progressed from the primitive instinctiveness of the animal mind to the state of developed self-consciousness characteristic of the modern human being, the prime necessity of judging accurately between apparentness and reality has been continuously emphasized in the race experience. This necessity has been the dominant incentive behind the amazing achievements of science. It is the one condition that makes metaphysics of any practical value.

Human beings are dominated and limited by their beliefs regarding reality, and they are dependent upon their thinking ability to correct their beliefs and in this way gain a measure of freedom from the domination and limitation imposed by ignorance. The peculiar function of metaphysics—not any particular metaphysical system, but the thinking habit which sometimes expresses itself in metaphysical systems—is to discover what is real as distinguished from what seems to be real. The especial function of science—again not a scientific theory or method, but the state of mind that is the formulator of scientific theories and methods—is to verify the discoveries of metaphysics and make them of use in everyday affairs. Only in crude human classifications are the metaphysician and the scientist two different persons. Actually all metaphysicians are by necessity scientists, and all scientists depend upon metaphysics for the vision that carries them forward.

However, human beings have not been and are not yet

aware to any marked extent that they are controlled by their beliefs regarding what is real and what is unreal. If they had known it, their progress would not have been such a long, hard, discouraging climb through the ages. They would have achieved more than a bitter, life-long struggle for barely enough to keep them from starving mentally, spiritually, physically. They would make a mockery of the present machine-dependent civilization. They would defy "three score years and ten" as a superstitious absurdity.

Are there any final limits to man's growth and development, to his individual and collective possibilities in experience and achievement? If there are, they have not yet been discovered. But it has been continually found out, ever since the being that we now call human peered for the first time out of the darkness of animalism into the light of self-conscious intelligence, that almost countless apparent limitations are not real limitations.

Take one simple limitation, that of speed and distance. Prehistoric man in his first awakenings could conceive of going no faster nor farther than his own two legs could carry him. Ages passed and civilization vastly progressed before man found out that he could travel a greater distance and more rapidly than some animal was able to take him. Indeed, only within the century has steam and electric development overcome the limitations of animal locomotion. Although the flying-machine has carried a man over two hundred miles an hour, no one today would venture to claim that the speed limit has been reached.

It is evident that it was prehistoric man's ignorance that limited him. He was not limited by realities but by his own mentality, which had not developed to the point where it could take advantage of actual conditions and possibilities. To the prehistoric man, speed, limited to

his own physical ability, was a reality. To the man of today, such a condition is an unreality. It was not what was real, but what he believed to be real, which circumscribed the prehistoric man. It must be true then that freedom from limitations is in proportion to mankind's understanding of what is real and what is unreal, and mankind's ability to discriminate between what is real and what is unreal.

Reality can never be found in external conditions. Reality is that which is eternally so. Honesty, for example, is a reality. Honesty, in a last analysis, is not conduct, but a state of mind. As an action, honesty cannot be anything but contemporaneously relative. It is hard for human beings to see this, because they are not accustomed to distinguish between a state of mind and the manifestation of a state of mind according to the immediate condition of belief.

A stock-broker may have had as honest a state of mind ten years ago as he has today. Yet ten years ago he very likely transacted business, and was honest about it, in a way that he could not transact it today and be honest. Honesty has been a reality to him all the time, but ten years ago certain ways of business were sound to him and seemed honest, which today are not real to him as an honest business man. The unreal, therefore, can be defined as that which is subject to change and revision to the degree that limited belief is destroyed by growing understanding.

What is meant by making a condition real or unreal? Let us illustrate: A bookkeeper, beginning his morning's work, makes a mistake, which he carries through the day's business, and does not discover until he balances up at night. All through the day's bookkeeping the bookkeeper has been making that mistake real, because, igno-

rant of its true nature, he has been deceived into believing that the mistake was the truth.

The instant he discovers that a mistake has been made, the true quality of the mistake is evident to him and he ceases to make it real. To be sure, he may be tempted to make other mistaken concepts real, such as vexation, chagrin and hurt pride, but the mistake itself, plainly uncovered in its falsity, is totally unreal, and therefore no longer deceptive nor dangerous.

One can never know that a mistake is the truth, because one can never know what is not so. One can be deceived into believing that a mistake is the truth. One can, of course, know the truth about a mistake, and this truth is that a mistake is a mistake and not the truth. It seems simple and clear that however subtly mistakes may masquerade as the truth, they never touch nor affect nor connect themselves with the truth. The nature of the truth is to be true; the nature of mistakes is to be false.

The only truth that can ever be known about mistakes is that they are mistakes and therefore false. No one should be so foolish as to believe that by studying and investigating mistakes, he can learn the truth. He should see, as with bookkeeping so with all right activities, that the clearer, more definite and complete are his knowledge and understanding of the truth, the keener will be his ability to detect mistakes and falsities, and thus escape being deceived by them.

As human beings, believing in the reality of material sense testimony, we may be tempted to waste time in trying to find where mistakes come from. The origin of evil is a will-o'-the-wisp, the pursuit of which lands one deep in the mire of mental bewilderment and darkness. Anyone, who knows enough, can explain how to correct a mistake, and thus show that as a true thing it never came at

all. No one, who knows anything, will waste his time trying to explain where a mistake, which never would have seemed to be if right, intelligent and true conditions had prevailed, originated. A child in school makes a mistake in doing his sums. The teacher points it out to him. She does not try to explain where it came from. She shows him that there is a mistake and that he has been deceived into believing that there is no mistake.

The child is tempted to continue making a reality of the mistake in two different ways. One is by feeling terribly about making it, weeping because he may have to stay after school, fearing that he may not be promoted, and so on as far as he permits his imagination to carry him. The second way is by becoming philosophical and wondering how it happened. In both instances, the mistake remains uncorrected, and will continue to remain uncorrected until the child does the one sensible thing under the circumstances—the thing that involves neither repentance nor philosophy—until he proves the absence of the mistake by doing the sum as it should be done.

To be sure, the child before correcting the mistake has a slate full of figures which it took him a long time to put down. They look like something. He hesitates to rub them out lest he lose something. It is hard for him to see that they are not really figures at all—only marks on a slate which seem to be figures. Marks on a slate are figures only when they represent mathematical values. The marks of the child who has made a mistake have no mathematical value. They do not prove that something has been done. On the contrary, they prove that nothing has been done. Therefore, for all their fine appearance, they are not figures—merely marks. To rub them out is not to destroy something but nothing.

So in human living, the insistent suggestion that, be-

cause time and effort have been expended, something must have been accomplished, has no more essential validity in itself than have the child's marks on the slate essential validity in themselves. Mental quality, not material appearance, determines validity and reality.

The mistakes in human living can no more be ignored than can the mistakes in arithmetic or bookkeeping. Human mistakes will eventually be uncovered, their nature made apparent, their quality shown to be that of mistakes instead of that of truth, just as bookkeeping mistakes are finally uncovered by the bookkeeper and their nature made apparent.

With human mistakes, as with the bookkeeping mistakes, this uncovering may take place quickly, if the human being, like the bookkeeper, learns and practises intelligently the valuable expedient of a frequent and effective balancing up. Otherwise, the uncovering comes less pleasantly in some form of inharmony. If there is any purpose in suffering, it is to teach human beings the need of learning how to distinguish quickly and clearly between the truth and the mistake—how to promote the truth and eliminate the mistake.

It should be fairly obvious that material sense testimony is not an important element in discriminating between reality and apparentness. To the ignorant savage and the instructed astronomer, the material sense testimony regarding the setting sun is exactly the same. Both see the sun set. The savage is in a different attitude towards the phenomenon because of his uninstructed state of mind. The astronomer does not have to change the material sense testimony regarding the setting sun in order not to be subject to the delusions that are regarded as truths by the savage. The astronomer's state of mind, not the testimony of his material senses, brings the free-

dom from delusion that is necessary for his progressive development in understanding astronomical science.

Progress in the understanding of metaphysical science does not mean that by some hocus-pocus, material sense testimony becomes different to the advanced metaphysician from what it is to the ordinary human being. Material sense testimony is always material sense testimony, always relative, never reliable, one thing to one person, another thing to another person. But whether it is pleasant or unpleasant, it is at no point essentially or scientifically related to the truth. It is a fact that a great deal of human suffering is due to the tendency of human beings to dodge looking at human problems fairly and squarely in terms of material sense testimony. Nevertheless, material sense testimony of itself gives no final nor reliable light on any human problem.

The difference between the enlightened metaphysician and the average human being is this: The average human being believes, under many conditions when he need not so believe, that the testimony of the material senses is both reliable and final. The intelligent metaphysician recognizes that under no circumstances, apparently good or apparently bad, can material sense testimony be taken at its face value as a final say-so.

Human living in some of its aspects is not unlike a piece of machinery. One would not expect to get very far—if his state of mind is that of the average human being—by standing before a piece of machinery which is out of order and declaring that it is not out of order. Somebody who knows how must fix what is wrong with the machine. Under such a circumstance, one could do a great deal for himself—not by foolishly standing before the machine, trying to make it work by means of some kind of thought projection or influence—but by being the intelligent in-

dividual he really is, studying out what is wrong with the machine and making it right.

Anyone who knows about machinery is always ready to examine conditions as they are in order to find out what is wrong and do away with it. An unwillingness or fear to examine the machine is a confession of ignorance.

With human inharmonies, including sickness, to the extent that one recognizes the unreliability or the unreality of the material sense testimony, he is willing to face the human conditions as material sense reports them to be, and at the same time he is able to perceive with a certain degree of mental and spiritual conviction that the material sense testimony is not finally nor irresistibly real.

If, for the sake of illustration, the healing of the man with the withered hand, as recorded in the Gospels, is regarded as having at least an element of truth—if it is granted that something happened sufficiently startling and unusual to make a marked impression on a number of human beings—it seems fairly reasonable to suppose that a man with a withered hand was seen by both Jesus and the others present—that what Jesus saw with his material eyes, and what the others saw with their material eyes, was practically the same.

The difference between Jesus and the others was that they accepted what their eyes saw—the testimony of the material senses—as conclusive and final, whereas Jesus did nothing of the kind. Evidently he was convinced that a broad, intelligent concept of life and its possibilities was not only more real than the testimony of the material senses, but could even command the material senses to report as real and present the more satisfactory condition, dictated by intelligence, instead of the unsatisfactory condition, outlined by fear and limitation.

Whatever the explanation—ruling out the one of a supernatural intervention of the divine as self-evidently superstitious and intelligently incredible—if Jesus healed the man with the withered hand, he was able to do it because the testimony of the material senses was less real to him than it was to those who never even thought of trying to do any healing.

No one ignores or even tries to ignore unpleasant or unsatisfactory material sense testimony unless he has an unworthy reason for ignoring it. If he has no such reason, he looks the testimony straight in the face, and the chances of finding out that the testimony is by no means as valid or conclusive as it seems to be are very much in his favor.

The reason that one ignores or tries to ignore material sense testimony is because he is convinced of its reality and is afraid to investigate. What can mental work, so-called, amount to under such conditions—the "knowing" that all is Mind, that Love and Spirit are the only realities, that there is no matter, no evil, and all the other affirmations and denials that are supposed to be so potent in bringing out the good and overcoming the bad in human living?

When used as a cloak to a state of mind afraid or unwilling to see the human facts, such "knowing" is obvious auto-suggestion. Its tendency is so to self-mesmerize the one doing it that he becomes temporarily blinded to the actual human conditions to be dealt with and thus increasingly less able to cope with them. Sooner or later he is almost certain to become the unwitting victim and partisan of all sorts of dishonesty and chicanery.

Only through the application of intelligence to the human problem can any sound gain be made in distinguishing between what is real and what is apparent. Only as the human elements involved are fairly examined on the

plane of their own belief can the human problem be accurately discerned and stated. It is the height of folly to believe that one, who neither accurately discerns nor states the problem, can be a reliable factor in solving it.

In mankind's present state of belief, some material sense testimony is satisfactory and some is unsatisfactory. A condition of physical good health is satisfactory; a condition of physical ill-health is unsatisfactory. Nevertheless all material sense testimony is fundamentally unreliable. Therefore, there is no more reality in satisfactory material sense testimony than there is in unsatisfactory material sense testimony—no more dependableness in the material sense testimony regarding good health than in that regarding bad health.

But the personal attitude towards pleasant sense testimony is entirely different from that towards unpleasant sense testimony. One can hardly help being satisfied when the material sense testimony is pleasant. It may be an instance where his moral scruples and training are violated. On that account, he may sentimentalize violently, go into a pious state of mind, and be concerned in a deceptively artificial way about his soul's salvation.

Moral scruples amount to nothing in promoting an understanding of the unreality of material sense testimony. What one is satisfied with, he will continue to be satisfied with so long as he remains in a state of mind that is satisfied with that particular condition. It is a common enough trick of the human mind to fortify itself in its comforts by making itself just enough uncomfortable mentally to salve its conscience and quiet its misgivings.

The testimony of the material senses, which is positively unsatisfactory to one, is the only material sense testimony, the unreality of which one can with conviction set about discerning and demonstrating. Here the incentive

is both sincere and powerful enough to induce what the human mind shrinks from getting mixed up with—genuine thought activity, real thinking.

After a time, experience is bound to make it clear that all material sense testimony, whether at the moment personally pleasant or unpleasant, is unsatisfactory because unreliable and deceptive. Then will begin in a fundamental and far-reaching way the intelligent line-drawing between the real and the unreal, between what is genuine and what is apparent, so necessary for humanity's mental, spiritual and physical freedom.

CHAPTER VIII

The Universe We Live In

Summary: Materialistic and idealistic theories regarding the universe—The theological theory of a personal Creator—Difficulties encountered in the mechanistic theory of evolution—Materialists can be fairly well classified—Idealists are distinctly individualistic—Relativity of time and space—The relation between God, man and the universe—The universe one lives in represents one's immediate concept of God or Truth—Everyone does not live in the same universe, though all seem to do so—Time, space and matter are modes of thought—As one becomes more definitely aware of his thought processes, he will more consciously be in a universe of his intelligent determining.

Men and women are rational beings. Very often, it is true, their rationalistic activities emanate from faulty and erroneous premises, and consequently their conclusions are distinctly irrational. This unfortunate result, however, is not due to irrationalism in the process of deduction, but to mistaken concepts and beliefs in the original and basic propositions.

Because men and women are rational, they live in a rationalistic universe. It could not be otherwise. Rational beings must by the very nature of things live in surroundings that appear to them to be true, real, lawful and comprehensible. Otherwise, they would not be able to stand it, and would perish from sheer inability to endure the inconceivable.

The present concept of human beings definitely and distinctly holds that material externalization is an independent entity, fundamentally unaffected by what anyone thinks. Because of this practically universal view,

the present rationalistic universe of all human beings is the embodiment of materialistic fatalism. Its most apparent and disconcerting accomplishment is the consistent thwarting and rendering futile of all attempts at individual progress and development, which the inherent rationalism of human beings instinctively and sanguinely put into operation.

This abiding contradiction between the independent material fatalism, which seems to be the external reality, and individual growth and development in the realm of mental conviction and spiritual conception, which is the actual necessity, provides under various guises and phases the great puzzle and problem of the human race. It cannot be solved until mankind gains a little clearer understanding of what this universe in which he seems to live really is, what its relation to him is, and what is his relation to it.

Two theories regarding the universe are generally held by such of mankind as bother to have any definite theories about it at all. One is the materialistic theory, sometimes inconclusively termed the rationalistic theory; the other is the idealistic theory. The first declares that the universe is what it seems to be—externalized material substance. The second declares the universe to be a more or less clumsy interpretation of mental and spiritual impressions.

The materialist, accepting fairly and literally the testimony of the five physical senses, holds that the universe is an external extension and fact, that it is exactly as it appears—land, water and air, star-dust and ether, nebulæ and fathomless space, held together and kept in order by its own inherent forces and substances, operating according to its own fixed and unchangeable laws.

He holds that while mankind can adapt itself more and more effectively to the universe, and while mankind can

within a certain range adapt the universe more and more efficiently to human needs—as one can to some extent change the shape of a rubber ball—neither mankind nor anything else (not even the naïvely conceived theological Creator of the universe) can stop or change its remorseless and resistless swing through eternity in accord with the rules of its own dominating naturalness.

It is the habit of the theologically trained and the theologically minded among the materialists to ignore the fatalism of their materialism. They do this by introducing an irrational theory of divine or miraculous interference with material law, logic and events. This is their way of refusing to face the rational conclusion that the God of their somewhat immature and vague imaginings is as helpless before the irresistible forces of their materialistic universe as they are themselves.

Is He outside their universe, and if so, how, where, in what manner or form—as a bigger extension than the universe? The mind and the imagination are hard put to conceive of such a scheme, and neither telescope nor microscope has ever discovered the slightest evidence of His presence. Does He govern the universe by His mind and will? Yes, declares the relieved theological materialist, He governs it by His mind and will.

If one asks for proof of this, he quickly finds that there is none—none that the more logical and not so hard put to it non-theological materialist will accept as worth a straw's weight against his overwhelming testimony that there is no personal God's intruding mind and will, checking or changing the relentless processes of material law.

If such a God stopped the sun for Joshua, He has never done it for anyone else so far as the records show. The inclination, therefore, is strong to question the evidence before unreservedly accepting a happening so unique, just

as one hesitates to grant out of hand the wisdom, beneficence and goodness of a Creator, who, supposedly, had the temerity to set going the soulless brutalities and heedless inertia of materialism.

Once the Biblical miracles of healing would have been confidently quoted as indications of divine intervention. Few theological materialists will do that today, however. There are other more rational explanations of these miracles. Too many of them are being modernly duplicated without the least recourse to a supernatural intervention.

The fact is that while scientific research in earth, sky and sea tends to prove the absence of the Creator conceived by theology, not a particle of rational evidence is discovered to prove His presence. If He made the universe in the first place, what has happened and is happening, viewed from the materialistic standpoint, tends to the conclusion that He has left it pretty much alone ever since.

Thus with all its obvious rationalism, the materialistic theory has several obvious difficulties. With or without the theological Creator, it is woefully weak as regards beginnings. It is also uncompromisingly pessimistic as regards endings. It provides no place between beginnings and endings for the heart instincts and the soul aspirations, and human beings, including the materialists themselves, find it both impossible and undesirable to abandon either their heart instincts or their aspirations.

In spite of manifold elaborations of the mechanistic theory of evolution, by which evolutionary impulse is held to be an automatic chance response to casual external stimuli, it is doubtful if any human being in his heart of hearts is convinced that this deification of chance explains anything or that it will ever be experimentally demonstrated. The very rationality, which must assume and

search for an orderly evolutionary process, is bound to assume, even when it refuses to search for it where it might be found, a Reason or a Cause for the orderly process.

Mechanism, however elaborate, can never be self-contained—with Reason or Cause within mechanism. They are always without. Mechanical self-starting without a beyond-the-immediate-mechanism impulse is inconceivable. Mechanical perpetual motion is a glamorous delusion—both theoretically and practically a dream.

Therefore the rationalists—those who are not lulled into stupidity by a magnitude of detail, who are not content to sort and re-sort fatuously and forever the inherently meaningless débris of blind materialism, who are weary of the search for living truth in the graves of the failed and forgotten, who cannot always play at making explanations which do not explain—are actually forced by the logical necessities of their investigations and conclusions to cease probing into matter and turn to mind for help, refreshment and enlightenment. Idealism is materialism's logical and unescapable nemesis.

It is comparatively easy to line up all the materialists under one banner and label them without doing any of them a particular injustice. They quarrel among themselves, to be sure, over the details of their game, but they all play it under the same rules. The sky may be their limit, but at least they have a limit, and on that account they are definable in somewhat general terms.

The idealist is in quite a different position. His very first audacity is to take time and space—those handy pigeon-holes, which are the honored accessories and reverenced necessities of the materialist—from the dignity of realities and plunge them into the ignominy of categories. Instead of permanent conditions, he chooses to regard

them as temporary conveniences. With neither time nor space as a check upon their possible vagaries, without the solid substance of real stuff—matter of some sort or other—under their feet, by what and how can one expect to hold the idealists to the specifications of a general classification?

Perhaps they may agree on such broad propositions as these: that the First Cause is mental, that the creative and the evolutionary impulse is mental, that the whole range of effect is mental—in short, that mankind lives a mental life instead of a matter one, and that it lives this mental life in a universe of mental impressions and their interpretations. But on no more are the idealists likely to agree or find as a class a common meeting place. Indeed, one is frankly optimistic in expecting so much. To the fullest extent, idealism is individualistic. In practical proof of the soundness of his theory, every idealist lives in the mental and spiritual universe of his own conceiving.

Therefore, in setting forth my idealistic concept of God, man and the universe, I am not trying to convince the materialists—except those who are more than half convinced already—nor do I expect to bring the idealists into the lockstep of conformity. My philosophy, such as it is, is but a stepping-stone to the practical end that tremendously interests me—the exercising to an enlarged degree, with growing knowledge and understanding, of what seems to me man's legitimate dominion over all tyrannies and limitations.

Stating the proposition in the broadest possible way and with what may seem to some offensive crudeness, I would liken that which is called God to the raw material of life and truth. I mean by that the infinite possibilities of knowing and loving and being, which are gathered to-

gether and stored up, as it were, under the general concept termed God.

I realize that the expression, "raw material," used in connection with God, may strike some sensitive souls unpleasantly. If they will overlook first impressions and pause to consider what God is—infinite Spirit, infinite Good, infinite Love, infinite Mind—they will undoubtedly perceive that the "raw material" referred to has nothing to do with material accumulations in mercantile storehouses. On the contrary, it means all the glorious and glorifying possibilities of idealistic and intelligent living.

Still pursuing the metaphor, I would liken man—individual man, you and me and all the rest of them, the man who thinks—to the manufacturer, the active agent, the knower and doer—(remember we are dealing with thoughts and spiritual qualities, not with things and outward actions)—whose business it is to work over in mind and heart and soul and spirit this raw material, find and declare some of its inexhaustible resources, and present them in the manufactured articles of concrete experiences in living and being.

These concrete evidences and manifestations, because of dominant though not fundamentally necessary psychological habit, apparently take the form of external entities, which seem to be apart from and not at all definitely connected with the individual and personal mentalities that are actually responsible for them.

This seemingly independent, externalized condition is called by mankind the universe. It seems to all of us a self-existent and self-contained entity. It seems to hold all of us under its laws. We appear as atoms of helplessness and hopelessness in comparison with its implacable immensity.

Notwithstanding the unequivocal testimony of the phys-

ical senses on these points, there is another aspect which hints at quite a different state of things,—which indicates that, instead of being a separate, self-existing entity, this manifestation which mankind calls the universe is really an immediate exposition of a continuous knowing and being, and is, therefore, dependent upon the nature of the contemporaneous mental states of its knowers for all the existence that it has.

There is a reason why the universe to the child with a limited point of view is always the universe of a child. The child can see in what he believes to be his surroundings only what his childish mind believes to be true. By the adult of a broader vision and understanding, the universe is differently perceived. To him it is a universe of immeasurable space and unfathomable mysteries.

Expressing myself again in a broad way, the universe one lives in represents his immediate concept and knowledge of God or Truth. At present, we all believe that matter is truth. Consequently we appear to ourselves to be living in a material universe. When we learn a little more definitely and fully that Mind and Spirit are truth, we shall naturally and normally find ourselves living in a universe which is to our sense more specifically mental and spiritual.

Most of us have had the experience of returning, after reaching manhood or womanhood, to localities and scenes with which we were familiar as children. We were surprised to find the house, which we had for years pictured to ourselves as an imposing mansion, a modest cottage; the stream of water, which had always seemed to us a rather formidable river, little more than a babbling brook; the distance to a kindly neighbor's, a journey of moment in our childhood memory, merely a few steps across the way.

Where was this magnified universe of our childhood? It was in our child-mind and nowhere else. If we had never grown up, it would still be there exactly as it seemed to be in our childhood. If no one ever grew up, the child-mind universe would be the real universe to everybody, and our present adult universe would be unknown, unconceived of, non-existent. Our philosophers would be philosophizing over, and our material scientists would be investigating, the out-of-proportion and inadequately conceived and coordinated universe of our childhood, and they would be doing it as wisely and as earnestly and as devotedly as they are philosophizing over and investigating the out-of-proportion and inadequately conceived universe of our adulthood.

It is generally recognized that in matters of detail two persons rarely if ever fully agree. Men and women do not see alike nor hear alike nor react alike to their sense impressions. In short, their sense impressions are not the same. Inasmuch as they cannot know anything of a sense impression universe except through their sense impressions, it seems evident enough that they cannot know, and therefore do not have, the same sense impression universe. A trained imagination and an active memory are important factors in getting and keeping clear vision—the sight of the eyes—and keen hearing—the hearing of the ears. Both imagination and memory are conspicuously individualistic.

It is also reasonably plain that approximate similarity of sense reactions is more a matter of similarity in education and bringing up than of similarity of external impressions. What is a pleasant odor and a delicious taste to the savage may be repugnant to the last degree to the man accustomed to the refinements or artificialities of civilization.

The relativity of time is comparatively easily conceived of, for all of us know that hours are short or long according to our interest or boredom. The relativity of space bothers a little more, because the space extension, so satisfactorily measured in inches, feet and rods, is by token of this satisfaction more definitely a fixed material condition to mankind than is the time extension of seconds, minutes and hours. One is thoroughly convinced that the space extension is there before his eyes, while he is quite as thoroughly convinced that the time extension is not there in just the same definite way. Indeed, the time extension is so much not there that no one can be at all sure of it unless he checks up his sense impressions by means of a material time-keeper. Yet, in spite of its definiteness, space is being continually annihilated—to use the conventional phrase—by swiftly moving machines for carrying men about and by still greater space-eliminating devices for hurling their thoughts from earth-end to earth-end in the twinkling of an eye.

Notwithstanding all this, the deception of a general alikeness in the appearance of things remains potent enough so that only a comparatively few have bothered to think what the variations in detailed experience—this easy relativity of time and space—must of necessity mean.

They mean that the practically universal assumption that all mankind is living in the same universe, and that this just-alike-to-all-of-us universe is an external, independent thing, has not a leg to stand on.

In view of the plain fact that time and space are modes by which we think, not conditions under which we live—in view of the fact that the detail of the life-experience of every one of us indicates positively that the universe is not the same to all of us, indeed, is not the same to any of us—in view of the fact that our agreements about

the universe are actually superficial, due to a chance similarity in heritage and education, while our differences are fundamental and cannot be entirely ironed out by any amount of heritage or education—the reasonable conclusion is that the universe, far from being an external, independent thing, is really the sum and substance of ourselves, the exemplification, in what seem to be external conditions, of what you and I and the rest of mankind believe at the moment to be true.

The universe is that which has been worked out thus far in the great achievement of discovering what is true, what is real, what is genuinely worthwhile.

To be sure, the universe of the present moment—at least that portion of it which we seem to hear most about—is apparently a riot of war-threats and destruction, of selfishness and bigotry, and finally of death and, as far as any material evidence shows to the contrary, annihilation, so that it sounds grimly ironical to say that such a universe is what has been worked out thus far in the discovery of the genuinely worthwhile. One naturally asks what is there worthwhile in the tragedy and threatened disaster at which our particular theory of life and civilization apparently has arrived. Nothing worthwhile, indeed, in the tragedy and disaster, but perhaps a great deal worthwhile to be learned from the fact that tragedy and disaster are here, and by a query for some sort of a basic and satisfactory reason why they are here.

It has been pointed out that time and space are modes of thought and not external material conditions. Human beings, under the thralldom of the finite, the limited, the materially concrete, cannot grasp the ever-present Now. So they divide what they call eternity into past, present and future, and invent a yard-stick with which to measure this eternity. The yard-stick is called time.

A little thought will make it clear that no one ever knows the past as the past. What happens is that when we carelessly say we know the past, we really are holding in our present thought certain concepts, immediately and at the instant created mental pictures, which we say are a knowledge of the past, but which are really the presentation of a certain state of mind in the present. There is no such thing as thinking or mentally conceiving in the past. To be known at all, what we call the past must of necessity be thought of and mentally conceived in the present.

Time is a prop for our thinking, a great temporary convenience like a crutch for a lame man; but because mankind persists in regarding time as a definite, material condition limiting and circumscribing its every activity, time is one of the greatest of taskmasters and tyrants, and will remain a taskmaster and tyrant as long as mankind continues to look upon it as an actuality instead of a convenience.

Space is also a yard-stick devised because the finite sense of mankind is just as helpless before an everpresent Here as before an everpresent Now. So, as an aid to immediate thinking and conceiving, Here is divided into a little here and a big there with space as a measurable place for here and there to be in. By the inevitable perversion which besets all of mankind's mental processes, space is not seen in its true aspect as a thought convenience, but is thoroughly believed in as an entity. So space, like time, becomes one of mankind's greatest taskmasters and tyrants, and will remain such until mankind's mental attitude towards space is changed by an understanding of its true nature.

As with time and space so with the whole concept of material reality. What is actually a way of thinking or

conceiving, a mental attitude or point of view, is universally held to be an entity or condition in itself. Matter is a mode of thought, which has been perverted into an external substance or standard, so thoroughly believed in as a substance that mankind does not even dream of making a single move without first getting matter's permission.

It is said that an elephant, chained for a period within a limited area, will not move out of that area after the chain is taken away. Although the chain which fastened him is no longer there, the mental sense of being chained still holds him. Such is mankind's bondage to matter. Matter may be a possible convenience as a thought process, but it is a tyrant unspeakable when believed in as a definite, independent external.

Notwithstanding that the chain of material reality, by which mankind believes that it is held, is not there, the full effects of limitation and tyrannical control are felt and will continue to be felt while the mental chain of matter's believed-in genuineness and reality as an outside substance, freighted with fateful laws and their seemingly unescapable consequences, holds its place as mankind's irresistible concept.

It is tragedy indescribable, this notion of a material universe eternally circumscribing and finally destroying mankind in fulfillment of the logical necessity of its own mechanistic perfection. A disease-ridden, a war-ridden, a superstition-ridden, a fetish-ridden, a death-ridden humanity evidences unmistakably the banefulness of materialism's blight. The limit of what can be borne has been reached—was reached as long ago at least as mankind's first lispings, which were cries of protest, demands for a reason, appeals for succor and salvation.

Is there no hope? Is there no way out? I believe that

there is—not an Aladdin lamp escape through the portals of death, but a step-by-step upward climb on the ladder of inspired right thinking. Judged by its direful effects, the insistent notion, forced upon all mankind by the characteristic modes of the material senses—and apparently upheld by the consistent testimony of the material senses—that man lives in a material universe and is irrevocably subject to its laws, does not commend itself to anyone's intelligence.

This is surely the best of reasons for denying its truth. Anyone who takes this first step of denial with genuine conviction—not with bravado—is certain to find evidences of the legitimacy of his denial in more than a few telling details of his everyday experience. He will be rewarded with trifles that hint at hope and even point the way to greater individual freedom, to further control of fate and chance. He will find himself regarding as not altogether fantastic the idea that what one thinks about the universe determines the effect that the universe has upon one—that the universe is never of itself the active agent, thrusting its necessities on man, but that man by the nature of his own attitude decides whether he shall be the victim or the master of the universe.

From such beginnings—little beginnings, indeed—it is, however, not such a far step to the conclusion that the universe has its being in consciousness, that it is what man is conscious of, that it is man's way of thinking, conceiving, knowing. If this is so, there is nothing irrational in the claim that man has dominion over the universe, which has its being in his consciousness. His own consciousness is, of course, the only consciousness that is consciousness to him. Somebody else's consciousness is an assumed, not a known, consciousness.

It is also a reasonable expectation that as one becomes

genuinely aware of his thought processes—as he learns to know himself so thoroughly that his mentality is no longer mostly unconsciousness or subconsciousness as far as he personally is concerned—he will consciously live in the universe of his intelligent determining, the universe which as creative artist he expresses and externalizes as his living concept of the good, the true and the beautiful.

Because to do so seems to be both reasonable and immeasurably filled with attractive possibilities, I choose to regard the universe as a thought mode or thought habit instead of a fixed, external, independently made or created thing or condition. It seems to me that the universe is expressing at the present moment, as it always has expressed at the present moment, not its own inherent conditions and necessities, but mankind's dominant and heedlessly accumulated concepts and beliefs regarding what is true and essential—that inasmuch as mankind, yielding to habit, custom and undisputed tradition, holds certain material ways and methods and so-called laws to be true and essential, the universe consistently presents these ways, methods and laws as true and essential, and will continue to present them as true and essential until there is a change in mankind's controlling mental state.

If there is any truth in this theory, the deduction follows that the universe as a place to live in can be vastly improved at once, here and now, by making one's beliefs about it less an affair of blind acceptance and more the outcome of intelligent, and consequently less restricted, thinking.

It would even appear reasonable that the millennium may not be a vague dream regarding an idealistic future, but a conceivable possibility of not necessarily distant achievement.

CHAPTER IX

Evolution, Spiritual and Material Correspondences, Consciousness

Summary: The practically universal acceptance of evolution—Credit that is due material science and scientists—The beginning of life has never been actually found in protoplasm—What the material evolutionist has really discovered—Evolution considered as a mode of thinking—Difference between symbols and correspondences—There is no system of correspondence between spiritual reality and material beliefs and externalizations—The meaning of counterfeit—Individual consciousness and personal consciousness—Subconsciousness—Consciousness is one and never actually divided.

Evolution—the unfolding of events or ideas in orderly succession through natural growth and development—is generally accepted by progressive modern thinkers as sound doctrine. There are various theories regarding specific details in the evolutionary process, around which center noisy controversies, such as speculations about mankind's descent from monkeys, but evolution itself is not necessarily in question by such controversies. In fact, it would be difficult to find today an enlightened body of men and women, who would seriously dispute the basic fact that life is an experience of growth and development, a progressive unfoldment, a process of evolution.

This is a tremendous change of viewpoint within a comparatively short time. Hardly more than half a century ago, it was the common belief, opposition to which was considered sacrilegious if not positively atheistic, that creation was literally a six-day affair and that the universe and its contents arrived equipped and in running

order straight from the hand of God. Of course, there are in the aggregate many who still hold to this belief, but they are hardly to be counted as either impartial investigators or deep thinkers. Whether they are conscious of it or not, they are still groping their way in the mist of outgrown theological superstitions.

Full credit must be given material science for the blows it has struck the hoary strongholds of bigotry and intolerance, ignorance and delusion—blows struck valiantly and persistently for freedom of mind and spirit by its sincere and painstaking investigations into the phenomena of material sense testimony. Full credit must be given material scientists for the splendid spirit of unprejudiced love of the truth, which they have made a living reality in the minds of men. But when, after tracing to his satisfaction the beginnings of life to the slime on the seashore, the material scientist is content to define life as a complex of innumerable chemical reactions in the substance called protoplasm and go no further than that, not all of us are ready to agree that he has really chased the evolutionary germ to its lair and made it captive.

Material science has never actually found the beginning of life in protoplasm or anywhere else. What it has found is the end of its own theory of life as a material phenomenon. The material scientist is much in need of the saving grace of humor to keep him from the absurdity of balancing the bulk of his own splendid intelligence—to say nothing of that of the rest of us—on the meagre chance that even innumerable chemical reactions set going the germ of destiny from which that intelligence was evolved. And even then, he has but settled his earth on the shoulders of an Atlas with nothing whatsoever for the feet of his Atlas to stand upon. These innumerable chemical reactions, what of them and where did they come from?

The fact is, every one of us must start with something. What it shall be is a matter of intelligent choice. The theologian starts with a personal Creator. The material scientist starts with innumerable chemical reactions. Quite a few, because observation and experience show what an important factor intelligence is in any demonstration of progressive development, start with Mind as the basic fact or condition, and therefore conclude that in mental modes and perceptions, rather than in mundane things, is to be found the secret of life and the true explanation and understanding of being.

Thus they regard evolution to be genuinely demonstrated, not in protoplasm blindly forced through myriad materialistic ramifications under equally blind mechanistic stimuli, but in mental and spiritual unfoldment and development.

What is it really that the material scientist has discovered in his tremendously interesting and fascinating protoplasmic investigations? He has discovered that for which he was searching—never anything higher than that for which he was searching.

Psychological eccentricities are not easy to follow even in specific cases, and one risks all sorts of misunderstandings when he attempts to generalize about them. Yet we all know how consistently one finds that for which he is looking, and just as consistently does not find that in which he has no interest.

Whether one is consciously at the moment on the search for what vitally interests him matters little or nothing. The mycologist, for example, walking casually through the fields, finds mushrooms, while I walking with him see not one.

But, you say, the mushrooms were there for him to find, and you might have discovered them just as he did.

Everybody reasons that way after the mushrooms have been found by somebody who was thinking mushrooms before he found them. Yet, it is plain, bald assumption to say that the mushrooms were there before they were discovered to be there—to claim that they were there for me, who was not thinking mushrooms, to discover, when the indisputable fact was that they were not there at all for me until somebody who was thinking mushrooms showed them to me.

There is no possible way of proving the mushrooms were there before they were found to be there. The question about their being there all the time does not arise and cannot arise until after they are discovered to be there. Somebody discovering that they are there is not proof of anything except that the mushrooms are there to the one who discovers them. To the one who does not discover them, they certainly are not there.

The question arises regarding the material scientist and the protoplasm: Did the material scientist discover something which was there before he discovered it, or did he first—not necessarily consciously, more likely unconsciously—determine what he was going to discover and then discover his determination?

Not for a moment should it be thought that I am casting the slightest aspersion upon the honesty and integrity of material scientists. I am dealing with psychological processes, which while common enough and obvious enough, because they are humanly universal, are nevertheless rarely taken much account of. We are so used to accepting offhand as true the material sense impression that seeing acts from the outside in and not from the inside out, that we do not stop to question why some are always seeing certain things, others seeing different things, and none seeing at all clearly that what is seen,

as well as what is not seen, is determined by the state of mind within, not by the condition of things without.

It may not be so far afield to conclude that one is on safer ground when he regards evolution as a mode of thinking, indicative of the progressive unfoldment of intelligent ideas and ideals in human consciousness, rather than as an independent material process. Then one is quite likely to perceive that the physical sense testimony, on which the material evolutionist relies for proof of his theory, actually has no positive nor fixed meaning in itself—that the meaning assigned it accords with the mental attitude of its interpreter.

It is always the mental standpoint from which material sense testimony is viewed, never the testimony itself, that determines the value of the testimony. Sense testimony regarding such a universally agreed upon force as gravitation is contradictory. Balloons go up, and stones fall down. Wood floats, and iron sinks. It is understanding that adjusts the seeming contradictions, and states a law, which may or may not have been there all the time, but which was of a surety unknown as a law until some human being, using his mentality more effectively on the point than any human being had before, discovered that it was there.

If one takes the material evolutionary process to symbolize, however roughly and crudely, the humble beginnings, the persistent unfoldings, the limitless possibilities inherent in true ideas as they are made manifest in the mental universe of consciousness—if he emphasizes the interpretation of things as important rather than the things themselves—then there are light, inspiration and genuine meaning in the detail of material evolution.

But when matter is held to be an independent entity, with power and development somehow incorporated within

itself so that the protoplasmic germ contains the full possibilities of the most far-reaching evolutionary development, what is there to it except meaningless assumption and palpable absurdity—or the tragedy of hopelessness and despair, all aspiration, all inspiration, crushed under the relentless momentum of a witless mechanical monster?

To say that material evolution and the universe of matter may be looked upon as symbols of spiritual unfoldment and the universe of Mind, is not to imply that there is a fixed relationship of any kind between mental concepts and qualities and material things and processes, or that there is some sort of a system of correspondences uniting them.

It is true that when man has an idea, he must express it in an externalization which is indicative of his immediate belief about the idea. To mankind in its present state of conviction regarding the reality and importance of matter, this immediate belief is expressed as matter in some of its manifold phases and mysteries. Because we have been educated to look at it that way, this matter-externalization seems to all of us to be possessed of a past and a pre-determined future, to have in itself continuity, entity, substance and independent existence, while, in contrast, the thought-life appears to be broken, indefinite, unsubstantial and dependent for purpose and initiative upon the incentive of material sense testimony.

Yet there is sufficient evidence of the unreliability, as well as the actual meaninglessness, of material sense testimony—until interpreted and directed by intelligent understanding—to show clearly that the notion of matter's independent, purposeful and continuous existence is a mental concept about matter and not the material condition itself.

Abandoned to its own devices, without the effect produced upon it or with it by someone who thinks, and works because he thinks, matter at once begins to deteriorate and lapse into confusion and chaos. Let a garden, for example, be neglected for only a few days—be deprived of the immediate influence of continuous, intelligent direction—and it shows unmistakable signs of degeneracy and disintegration. The livableness of a house lasts only as long as some one lives in the house.

Notwithstanding all our training and consequent belief to the contrary, the sound evidence of experience and a little thoughtful deduction reverse the physical sense testimony in favor of matter's supremacy, make matter always an effect and never a cause, and find it continually dependent for meaning upon the state of mind of which it is the immediate and temporary product.

From the standpoint of quality, matter, so far from possessing anything that corresponds to Mind and Spirit, is the exact opposite of Mind and Spirit. Mind and Spirit are light; matter is darkness. Mind and Spirit are positive; matter is negative. Mind and Spirit are original substance; matter is counterfeit substance.

Quite often, by those who have not really thought about it, the word counterfeit is regarded as indicating something which corresponds to the real. What the word actually designates is a deceptive imitation, which looks like the real, but which is the exact opposite of the real in quality. Superficial appearance makes a counterfeit seem to be real, and superficial appearance makes matter seem to be substance.

Judged casually by its appearance, a counterfeit dollar might be mistaken for a real dollar, though this mistake in judgment would not change the fact that a counterfeit dollar is always the opposite of a real dollar. The real

dollar is worth one hundred cents; the counterfeit dollar is worth nothing at all.

The teller at the bank, used to handling money, is not deceived by the counterfeit. At once, by touch, by sight, by some intuitive sense that seems almost automatic, he detects the counterfeit and throws it out. To one sufficiently trained to know the genuine, a counterfeit is immediately apparent.

So with conditions mental and material, it is understanding of the true quality of Mind and Spirit that makes it possible with growing certainty to detect and cast out the spurious suggestions of material belief and physical sense testimony. Progress is not the growth and development of materiality into a corresponding spirituality. Because materiality and spirituality are opposites, such a thing is impossible. Darkness does not develop into light; light destroys darkness.

What actually occurs under the more definite manifestation of spiritual reality, is the destruction and consequent disappearance of a material suppositional opposite to spiritual reality.

There is no fundamental law nor principle governing counterfeits. A counterfeit does not have to appear like the genuine in order to be a counterfeit. It merely has to be accepted as genuine by somebody ignorant enough of the genuine to be deceived by the false claim that the counterfeit is genuine. What makes a counterfeit, is not the thing itself, but somebody's false belief about the thing.

Nothing can be soundly learned about the genuine by studying counterfeits. Therefore, while it is possible oftentimes to find a reason for a material manifestation by discovering and analyzing the mental state that caused it, it is not possible with certainty to reverse the process and get at states of mind through study and analysis of

physical phenomena. While ideas are always expressed, they are not always expressed in the same way. When it comes to expression, to the infinite possibilities inherent in the ideas must be added the infinite possibilities inherent in the individuals who have the ideas and become the active agents for their manifestation.

In contrast to this condition of unlimited possibilities, material ways and means are by nature finite and limited. They cannot correspond to nor parallel the infinite. Repetition and sameness dog the heel of materiality. A system of correspondences between mental concepts and material things would mean the same range for matter as for Mind, the same perfection in material manifestation as in mental concept.

It would mean that divine activities, the idealistic and the inspirational, would find satisfactory and enduring expression in certain materialistic processes and selected human actions—in the laws and conditions of matter-nature and in human organizations, methods and persons. It would follow that the perpetuating of primitively natural circumstances, and the upholding of certain human contraptions and authorities, would automatically bring divine activities into being. There would be no other way to manifest the divine than by getting in line with the right sort of materialism and identifying one's self with the divinely authorized organization, following the divinely appointed method and obeying the divinely chosen personalities.

Of course, this is exactly what a great many devoted human beings are doing. But is there anything in human experience, looked at sensibly, set forth historically, which indicates that such views and such proceedings are intelligently advantageous?

Not in the history of religious organizations surely. We

find one succeeding another with monotonous regularity, each in its turn claiming to be the divinely appointed custodian of the eternal truth. Not in the record of human systems and customs. The good of one generation is too often the evil of the next. Not in human personalities, although all the credit possible be given to the great ones of the race. Not in unadorned nature herself, for civilized man's history is largely written in terms of nature overcome.

Notwithstanding the insistent suggestions to the contrary, particularly in regard to contemporaneous affairs, it really looks as if everything that humanity has ever experienced, from the protoplasmic past to the puzzling present, is a contradiction of the claim that the eternal unfoldment of ideas in the realm of Mind and Spirit has a fixed corresponding manifestation in the realm of material externalization.

One is bound to conclude that material things, experiences, organizations, systems and persons—however fine, splendid and grand they may be at the moment—have not a single iota of the divine and eternal attached to them. These externalizations are the temporary, transitory and usually instinctive, rather than intelligent, manifesting forth of the immediate personal and general belief about reality, but they have no essential connection whatsoever with reality.

In a rude way, the life-process finds an illustration in the modern moving picture. Working coordinately to produce the desired result are the light, the moving picture machine, the film and the screen. Together they bring out the appearance of a living actuality. One can conceive of an ignorant person, knowing nothing of moving pictures, who might be deceived into believing that he was looking upon a contemporaneous happening. Those who do know

about moving pictures and understand what is taking place would never be fooled in that way.

Suppose, for the sake of carrying the analogy a little further, that the light be likened to God, the moving picture machine to man, and the film to individual consciousness. The light by itself has infinite possibilities, but these are without entity or expression. The machine by itself, though in combination with the light, may grind on forever and nothing happens that has meaning or quality. Not until the film, typifying individual consciousness, is placed in the machine, does the light reveal its possibilities, the machine demonstrate its purpose, and the film set forth its meaning on the screen, which may be likened to the universe.

Let us suppose, as indeed often happens, that a defect appears in the picture on the screen. Would it not be natural for the person, who knows nothing about moving pictures, to attempt to remedy the defect where it appears to be, on the screen? That is exactly what the physicians, the statesmen and the ministers are doing with the defects of peoples, systems and religions. They are working with might and main over the appearances on the screen—over our bodies, our governments and our churches. But those who know something about moving pictures do not waste time fussing with the screen. When a defect appears, they know that the trouble is with the film, and they remedy the defect by changing the film.

So with the many defects in daily living—defects which seem to be in environment, in the very substance and laws of the universe itself. Some time it will be seen more clearly than it is now, that the real difficulty is in the film of individual and universal consciousness—that when this is renewed by more intelligent thinking, bringing more comprehensive and more definite understanding to mankind,

defects that seem to be on the screen of external living will vanish as the new film reveals its freshly perceived beauties.

To make this moving picture illustration both more accurate and far-reaching, one should designate the film as either individual or personal consciousness according as its quality is revealed on the screen, a distinction which the previous analysis of individuality and personality will show is inherent and fundamental. Individual consciousness is a genuine entity capable of infinite expansion and development. Personal consciousness is the whimsical fancy of the moment without substance and without sound reason for being, the child of chance and suggestion.

In the truest sense, personal consciousness is not consciousness at all. It is as if one were deceived by a mirage into believing that there is a lake where actually there is no lake. Under such circumstances, one is not conscious of the presence of a lake. What he believes he is conscious of, has no existence. He is conscious of a false belief, and that certainly is next door to being conscious of nothing at all.

To be really conscious, one must have something more than the belief that the externalization, of which he seems to be conscious, is what it appears to him to be. Otherwise, under the spell of the vagaries and delusions of personal consciousness, he may be deceived by an appearance as is the traveller in the desert by a mirage. To be really conscious, one must have the realization and understanding in a measure of the genuine, the sincere and the real in the realm of perception and inner feeling. He must know mental and spiritual quality. To the extent that he does, he has individual consciousness, and is both being and expressing the self that he really is.

Consciousness is a troublesome subject to deal with.

The reason for this is that consciousness is so definitely ourselves that it is hard to get it far enough away to be able to look at it squarely and define it sensibly. Is consciousness only the meagre experience of one's waking hours exercised within the narrow range of immediate sense impressions? Some would say so, and all of us are quite apt thoughtlessly to accept this very personal cognizance as the limit of practical perceiving and knowing.

Yet we all are aware that there is some kind of a consciousness just as active and just as responsible and responsive when we are asleep as when we are awake. It is the consciousness that wakes us up when we are asleep and there is imperative enough need for our awakening. Not only are the physical functions controlled by it, and the mental phenomena called dreams cognized and recorded by it so that they are remembered after awakening, but it often will reply intelligently to questions, and under the stimulus of extreme excitement or danger, such as sleep-walking or an accident, will actually make the body do its bidding while the little conscious consciousness is still unconscious in sleep.

Everybody also knows from his own experience that the line between that which personal belief declares one is conscious of and that which, to the best of his personal belief, one is not conscious of, is vaguely drawn, at all times fluctuating and indeterminate. There is not a fixed place where consciousness begins and unconsciousness ends. One flutters back and forth in the most extraordinary and haphazard way between that of which he is conscious and that of which he is not conscious. The weird plights of the absent-minded professor make us laugh because they are all of them more or less our plights due to our inexplicable lapses from the conscious to the unconscious.

The psycho-analyst, finding how much the littleness that seems to be consciousness is influenced and affected by the bigness that does not seem to be consciousness, makes a valiant effort to clarify the situation. He calls the whole wide range of individual and personal mentality, of which one does not seem to be immediately conscious, subconsciousness. Into this he plunges all one's past, the greater part of one's present, and most of one's hope of the future.

It is rather a terrifying place, this subconsciousness. According to the psycho-analyst, it never forgets anything, it never listens to reason, it never quits following on with relentless logic. To be sure, the little consciousness has a sort of control over it, if it is smart enough to catch it napping and pounces upon it with the right suggestion delivered in the right way. But, even at that, this subconsciousness is pretty certain to make a heap of trouble for all of us, because it is by far the biggest part of us and has stored up against us the most amazing memory of everything we ever did or thought we might do, and besides that, everything that everybody else ever did to us or that we hoped or feared he might do.

Subconsciousness, viewed by the psycho-analyst, is our unwritten autobiography, and it has the recording angel of Holy Writ left behind, as if standing, in the race of getting down our sins of omission and commission.

For all its ingenuity and fascination, there is too much of the baffling and hopeless, the mysterious and unwholesome, in this theory of a mighty subconsciousness to make it entirely acceptable. Thrusting mentality into the darkness of the subconscious, and then out of this darkness to expect to get increased clarity of vision and intelligence in comprehending and dealing with human problems, is neither reasonable nor edifying.

Real and enduring light on the problem of how to gain

the enlarged self-knowledge essential for individual progress and happiness, is likely to come, so it would seem, through more consciousness and less subconsciousness. Is it not, therefore, a fundamental error to divide consciousness into two elements, consciousness and subconsciousness, when both are really the same thing under different aspects or points of view?

Inspiration, perception, realization—the vision through which humanity's progress comes—are always present experiences. They have neither past nor future; they are always here, never there. It is the human habit, however, to classify the sum total of knowledge under the category of time as past, present and future, and under the category of space as here or there. With the classification goes the claim that, while there may be some consciousness of the present now and the present here, there is no consciousness of the past, the future and the there. About them there are only imaginations.

Such classifications have nothing final about them. When one says he knows what has taken place in the past, he knows it, not because he has read it in a history, but because he has become conscious of it in the present. He re-creates the event in the present in order to know it in the past. What he knows is not an event that was, but an event that is. It does not have the characteristics of a past event, but those of the present knower. When one says he knows something that took place somewhere else, he knows it only as he creates it here in the present consciousness. It is the bad habit of accepting as necessary the limitations associated with time and space that makes conscious consciousness apparently such a little thing.

Mankind should regard consciousness as one, a unit, and never really divided, and see that what for the time being seems to be subconsciousness or unconsciousness, is

a claim of personal limitation, a temporary condition or belief, which is in the process of being destroyed and eliminated. This one and universal consciousness is my consciousness, your consciousness, everyone's consciousness—its essential nature and quality looking towards infinite perception and realization individualized as my, yours, everybody's full and complete consciousness now of all that ever did take place, is taking place, and possibly—who knows—ever will take place?

Of course, this does not seem to be at all true of anyone's consciousness at the present moment—so self-evidently not true that one of the easiest things in the world to do is to scoff at the notion and dismiss it with an airy wave of the hand as impossibly absurd. This only shows, however, how prone we are to accept as sound fact the limitations that we have become accustomed to and to regard them as insurmountable and right.

Yet all of us know that we really are conscious of much more than we seem to be conscious of. We walk down the street absorbed in thought, but we do not stub our toes on the curbstones nor stumble on the uneven places in the sidewalk. We must be conscious of all these obstacles, or we should not be so successful in avoiding them.

Mental healers are often called upon to give what is termed absent treatment—to work mentally for the health and harmony of patients a long distance away. These treatments are in many, many cases startlingly effective and satisfactory in the results obtained.

Absent treatment, with its practical demonstrations of the elimination of space, certainly tends to show that the commonly accepted space limitation placed upon consciousness is not always strictly adhered to.

Many men and women are unconscious of an ability

to read, and consequently unconscious of the wealth of knowledge contained in books. They say that they cannot read, but this is not an exact statement. Practically all of them can read as well as those who do read. They have not made the effort to learn to read. Their unconsciousness of an ability to read and of the knowledge available to those who do read, is an unnecessary, self-imposed limitation.

In a final analysis, all limitations are self-imposed, notwithstanding that human beings classify them distinctively as personal and universal. The personal limitations, they feel, can be overcome by some, even if not by all. The universal limitations, they feel, cannot be overcome by anyone. Yet, every once in a while, a limitation, looked upon as universal, is banished by the inventive genius or daring spirit of some human being.

In this way the area of consciousness is being increased and the area of unconsciousness is being decreased. Where shall the final limit be drawn? How can it be intelligently drawn anywhere? There is, indeed, no such thing conceivable as a final limitation, which is another way of saying that the claim, which for the moment holds us all, of being only partially conscious of what is taking place in the universality of events, past, present and future, is not as a finality a true claim. There really is no stopping place this side of the infinite for the completeness of my consciousness and your consciousness.

Man, individualized as myself and yourself, may not at the present moment realize how much he knows, but even at that, this is more an apparent than a real ignorance. Place almost anyone in a position demanding immediate intelligent action without a chance to become personally self-conscious, and he will do much better than would naturally be expected of him. This shows how

much more he knows—how much more he is conscious of —than he believes he is.

Man is what he is—complete and universal consciousness. Complete and universal consciousness is an individual right to be claimed as a right immediately, here and now. The sense of unconsciousness and the theory of subconsciousness are as false as any other claims of limitation.

What is really happening under the influence of an expanding realization of the truth of infinite being, is that all mankind is continually thrusting back the wall, which apparently separates the conscious from the unconscious. The conscious is becoming consciously more definite and far-reaching; the unconscious is diminishing, and is confronted with the logical necessity of entirely disappearing.

You and I will never be different from what we now are, will never be greater than we are now; but we shall constantly and forever become more and more conscious of what we are and of what is.

CHAPTER X

Thought Transference and Sin

Summary: The generally accepted view is that men and women are subjected to a complexity of mental influences over which they have little or no control—The unwitting yielding to suggestion is a vicious psychological habit that should be broken—The claim questioned that human beings are influenced involuntarily by outside suggestion—Necessity of deciding either for or against involuntary influence—Illustrations which tend to show that the response to suggestion is determined by the quality of the individual or personal mentality—Mankind lives under the laws that it makes for itself—Heredity and environment—Sin and the moral law—The generally indulged-in sin of not thinking and its tragic results.

According to the generally accepted view, which is also the apparently obvious deduction from human experience, men and women are not to any practical extent free agents. While they may conceive of themselves as in a degree choosing and determining a certain proportion of their life activities, even this restricted liberty of action is looked upon more as an appearance of freedom than actual freedom. The true condition, according to popular psychological theory, is that humanity is living in the midst of a great complexity of mental influences—some of them of personal and immediate origin, but most of them the chance accumulations of an unfathomable past.

In consonance with this view, the mind of man is held to be the puzzling product of a vast wilderness of consequential and inconsequential mental riff-raff, and human beings are declared to be ceaselessly and unwittingly affected and swayed in thought and action without their knowledge, volition, desire or cooperation.

It would be absurd to deny or even dispute the accuracy of this analysis of the human mind as the human mentality reveals itself under laboratory tests and sensatory supervisions. The complacency and ignorance of human beings—their almost universal habits of heedless, thoughtless and unchallenged response to suggestion as distinguished from intelligent determination—have produced exactly these conditions of mental and physical bondage in the surface life-experience of humanity.

The quality and the quantity of the testimony, which apparently warrants and supports the claim that mankind is both the product and the victim of past and present dominating mental suggestion, shaping and controlling him without self-knowledge or self-volition, are wellnigh overwhelming. Therefore one flies in the face of almost unanimous human opinion when he ventures the assertion that the testimony does not finally and conclusively prove that the condition which it seems to validate is the condition that actually is or that must be.

When men and women are deceived about situations and circumstances, believing them to be other than they are—when they are misinformed regarding the causes for their actions and ignorant of the import of them—they do many foolish and unintelligent things. They act in ways for which there is no sound reason and no accountable necessity. They thus appear to themselves and to others to be under various kinds of compulsion.

The condition, however, is not fundamentally one of compulsion, but one of not thinking. When thought becomes active, these very persons find that they can choose both to be and to do things quite different from those that they feel and do as the manifested effects of their delusions and misconceptions. They have been right along free to act in many other ways than they did act,

but not being conscious of freedom, they seemed to be in bondage to one way.

Ignorance binds and blinds with dominating suggestions of limitation those who are ignorant, but it is self-evident that ignorance can be overcome and its limiting and deceptive influence can be destroyed.

The ancients, so far as we know, never circumnavigated the globe. They could have done so as far as actual conditions were concerned. The ignorance of their time, and the dominating suggestion of limitation foisted on them by this ignorance, kept them from doing it. But this was not a necessary nor an eternal condition. Somebody finally, either premeditatively or accidentally, freed himself from this limiting suggestion. Then he not only circumnavigated the globe, but he also proved that there was nothing to prevent others from doing it.

More than that, he showed that the fatal error was not the suggestion, but the mental attitude, still persistent in mankind towards so many aspects of the life problem, the tendency to perpetuate an ignorant, unenlightened, uncurious mind as a possession to be proud of. It is egotistical stupidity which is constantly robbing men, though always but temporarily—not of the inherent ability to overcome dominating suggestion, but of the will to exercise the ability. Showing superiority to suggestion is an achievement always possible, when men and women are sufficiently aroused mentally to set about accomplishing it.

The conclusion that men and women are mentally influenced without their knowledge or cooperation is easily arrived at. It is the obvious first choice. Once arrived at, it is most satisfactorily maintained by the same superficial sense testimony that brought it to the fore. It takes unusual circumstances and extraordinary demands to

force before the conscious thinking mind questions regarding the validity of the general proposition of thought transference as conventionally conceived. Of slow growth are doubts concerning the actuality of the power apparently exercised by one human being over another or by the blank impersonality of race or environment over all human beings.

No one can gainsay that there are manifold temptations to yield one's self to the domination of both the accumulated suggestions of the past and the state of mind of another. It cannot be denied that there are a multitude of subtle motives of a personal and impersonal nature, which tend to hide both the fact and the reason for such yielding.

The instances of yielding are, indeed, altogether too abundant. They indicate a universal and vicious psychological habit, which should be broken no matter how great the effort required to do so. But is the claim true that this yielding is always or ever involuntary, and that it takes place in spite of, instead of because of, the state of mind of the one who yields?

If the commonly held view of the power of thought transference to act independently of the personal equation of the one against whom it is directed is sound, it is evident that all of us are in a most precarious position. If I, for example, can be made to do a good or a bad deed, or feel harmonious or inharmonious, by the effect that somebody's mentality has on my mentality without my knowledge, desire or cooperation, such fine ideals as individual freedom and sane, unprejudiced, uninfluenced thinking are mad and impossible dreams.

There is no halfway stand to take in this matter. One cannot straddle two positions with the ready, but absurd, notion that at certain times and in some ways one may

be involuntarily influenced, while at other times and in other ways he is not involuntarily influenced. Two entirely different and opposing states of individual and personal mind and being are involved: one that of inherent, continually conceived freedom imbued with a conviction of the possibility of winning the conscious mastery of fate; the other that of animated and unescapable puppet-playing, doing it very prettily, it may be, but controlled always by the power that manipulates the wires.

Only one, not both, of the two conditions can be true. One is either involuntarily responsive to thought transference or he is not involuntarily responsive, for to be involuntarily influenced at all is to open the door to every possible phase of involuntary mental control and domination. Of course, if one is not involuntarily influenced, the whole theory of the actuality of thought transference goes by the board. It is not then a question of influence, but of individual or personal rejection or acceptance of mental suggestions.

When one ceases his habitual squirrel-in-a-wheel kind of living long enough to take in the import of this claim of thought transference, the condition it implies is inconceivably shocking. It would make individuality a delusion, intelligence an irony if not an impossibility, and man bound for degeneracy into animalism, sensuality and debauchery beyond the imagination to picture.

Indeed, were there not somewhere a mistake in the interpretation of the testimony, the doom of man would have been so irredeemably sealed from the beginning, that none of us would be here in a condition of mind to talk about it. The evidence that really counts is the historical fact that man has laboriously, but actually and consistently, dominated both his heritage and his environment.

The most convincing proof of the falsity of the claim of involuntary control is the fact that you and I can discuss—that we are mentally and spiritually free enough to discuss—with a certain amount of sane reasonableness the truth or the falsity of the proposition of our freedom or slavery. Reason, the hope of salvation, all worthy ambition, every step forward that any individual or the race itself has ever taken, force the conviction that, notwithstanding the great weight of testimony to the contrary, man is always a free agent, and is not influenced mentally or otherwise apart from his volition, desire and cooperation.

It should be recognized that in making such a statement one is not foolishly overlooking, ignoring, minimizing or even quarrelling with sense testimony and the conclusions that are naturally enough drawn from it, when it is viewed either as entirely reliable or when it is for the time being accepted as an expediency to be taken at its face value in the immediate human problem.

Thus the Mendel law of heredity is as interesting to me as to one who is completely convinced of its arbitrary reality, and would be used as readily and effectively in a practical way by me in breeding chickens as it would be by him. It is not the testimony itself that is objected to nor denied, but the soundness of the theory which the testimony is held to prove. The argument is not over what seems to be, but over the final interpretation and meaning that are deduced from what seems to be.

If one went to the theatre and saw something portrayed on the stage, which greatly moved him, he would be quite likely to say offhand that the scene on the stage made him weep. Yet he would know perfectly well, if he stopped to consider the actual conditions, that it was not

the happening on the stage that made him feel the way he did, but his reaction to the suggestion emanating from the incident presented on the stage.

If he does not see that this is the case, let him go to the theatre in a different state of mind and observe how the dramatic moment affects him.

If a salesman tries to sell one something, bringing to bear all the accomplishments in the way of suggestion which are so often the salesman's practical, if questionable, aids, one is likely to succumb to the insinuating blandishments. But though one does, one is well aware that he himself does the succumbing. The salesman goes no further and can go no further than to present the temptation. If one had been in a little different state of mind, all the work of suggestion in an effort to sell would have gone for naught.

It is not difficult to see in instances where the suggestion is consciously offered—by sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell—that the acceptance or rejection of the suggestion lies entirely within the control and volition of the one to whom the suggestion is made. He may yield, it is true, and he may yield when it would be much to his advantage not to yield. Nevertheless, he yields or does not yield because of the weakness or strength, the short-sightedness or wisdom, the bad or good judgment, for which he himself and no one else is at the moment responsible.

Going one step farther, what about the person who is under direct hypnotic control—is he the unresisting mental slave of the one who has hypnotized him? I am not an authority on hypnotism, and I have never made any firsthand experiments in hypnotism. So I am obliged to rely upon those who have for information.

In the first place, contrary to the popular belief that a subject can be brought under hypnotic control against

his will, no hypnotist who is not a charlatan would dream of making such a claim. He knows that the willing cooperation of the subject is necessary, and that at times, even with the willing, conscious cooperation of the subject, hypnosis cannot be induced.

Furthermore, those who are familiar with the behavior of subjects under hypnotic control declare that the hypnotizer cannot overrule the hypnotized in matters regarding which the one who is hypnotized has a positive conviction. If the subject has a definite conviction against drinking whiskey, he cannot be made to drink a glass of water if he believes that it is whiskey.

The hypnotists have repeatedly affirmed as a fact shown by their experiments that an honest man, though under hypnotic control and subjected to direct suggestion, will not steal nor do anything else in violation of his established sense of right. This is surely definite testimony to the fact of the individual's government of his actions and reactions even under extremely unfavorable conditions.

It seems fair to conclude from these incidents that the individual responds or does not respond to suggestion according as the suggestion appeals or does not appeal to him. The appeal or lack of appeal of the suggestion is determined, not by the nature or supposed power of the suggestion, but by the mental and spiritual quality or state of the individual.

The situation may be illustrated by a tuning fork, which may be taken to represent individual or personal consciousness, yours and mine. The fork is in tune with A. Place it on the piano and run the scales up and down without sounding the A, and the tuning fork is unresponsive. Let the A be sounded, to which the tuning fork is in harmony, and immediately the fork vibrates. All the

notes on the piano are nonexistent to the tuning fork except the one with which it is in accord.

Call the tones sounded by the piano suggestions. It will be seen that the only suggestion that has any influence over the tuning fork is the one with which its own pitch is in accord. It is not really the piano, but the pitch of the tuning fork, which determines whether or not the tuning fork shall vibrate. Nor does the tuning fork vibrate because it happens to be near some particular piano and is affected by that piano's peculiarities. Let the A be sounded on a violin, or on a tin pan for that matter, and the tuning fork will vibrate just as readily. The power given to the suggestion is not in the instrument, but in the pitch of the tuning fork.

Suppose that some one unacquainted with the law of acoustics, should desire to destroy the susceptibility of the tuning fork to the pitch of A. Being a very ignorant person and seeing the superficial condition—that the tuning fork vibrates when A is struck on the piano—what would be more natural than for him to conclude that the piano alone is responsible for the tuning fork's behavior, and from this premise to reason that by taking away the piano or removing the tuning fork from the sphere of the piano's influence, the desired end will be accomplished, and the tuning fork will no longer be affected by A?

Nothing at all would be accomplished by such procedures, for the reasoning is from an erroneous premise. The susceptibility of the tuning fork to A has nothing to do with environment, and no manipulation of environment can ever amount to anything. There is just one way to make the tuning fork unresponsive to A, and that is to change its pitch.

Personal consciousness is somewhat like the tuning fork. It has a certain pitch. The elements that go to

make up its peculiar nature and sense of being also determine its points of susceptibility to suggestion. The great range of possible and impossible suggestions under the classifications of heredity and environment, personality or tribe or race, may be played up and down through the whole gamut of their suppositional infinitude. It will all mean nothing to the personal consciousness unless the especial elements or qualities are presented which appeal to this particular consciousness as real. Then personal sense will respond by accepting the suggestion and manifesting the characteristics of the suggestion.

To one looking on, it seems most obviously apparent that the personal consciousness has been dominated by the suggestion, whereas what has actually happened is that the personal consciousness has seized upon the suggestion and given it a deceptive appearance of reality and power. Therefore, it is quite as foolish to try to free some particular personal consciousness from its susceptibility to a certain line of suggestions by setting about the hopeless task of eliminating the suggestions, as it would be to expect to free the tuning fork of the effect wrought upon it by A by destroying the piano.

To gain anything, the pitch of the personal consciousness must be changed even as the pitch of the tuning fork must be changed. With the consciousness, this change of pitch is brought about through the educational and spiritualizing effect of right thinking, tending more and more completely, through the attainment of individual unity with intelligently unfolding principle, to destroy personal susceptibility to vagrant suggestions.

Far more than it realizes, mankind lives under the laws that it makes for itself. Human beings are with disconcerting consistency fulfilling in their daily experiences the rules and regulations that they have unwittingly and

unwisely laid down for themselves. Well may they pray to be saved from the evil effects of their idle words.

Practically all of this is done ignorantly, and it is casually passed by as all in line with a mysterious Nature, or a mythical Providence, with an equally hypothetical Devil coming in once in a while for a share. Those are most largely the victims of heredity—whether a good one or a bad one does not greatly matter in the long run—who consciously or unconsciously most definitely hold themselves under the so-called law of heredity. Their heredity-susceptibility is not because the power or law lies in the heredity, or because there is such a thing as heredity with laws governing it. Their experiences are what they are because, by the law which they have made for themselves, they have determined their own fate and fastened upon their own wrists the chains of an heredity suggestion.

What is true regarding heredity, is true regarding environment and every other phase and form of human living and experience, personal or impersonal. Difficult much of the time to trace because of inferior self-knowledge and pitiable ignorance of psychological by-ways and hedges, it is, nevertheless, the law that one consciously or unconsciously makes for himself, which determines his greatness or his littleness, his happiness or his misery, his riches or his lack, his health or his sickness.

This self-determination is not to any extent the result of our theories. It goes far deeper than those—to our actual convictions, our innermost states of mind, the immediate essence of our being. One may have the most beautiful and captivating concepts about himself and the rest of mankind. He may dream of the most entrancing idealism. But if the recesses of his inner believing and being are beset with fear and fateful superstitions—and

this is the way with all of us to a far greater degree than it should be—his fine ideals and his lovely dreams will not keep him from accepting unworthy and unintelligent suggestions and expressing them in his daily life.

To improve one's life experience scientifically and genuinely, one must continually become better and better acquainted with one's self—with one's weakness as well as one's strength—in order to augment that which is worthwhile and overcome that which is unworthy. In addition, one must intelligently—with a growing consciousness and a growing conviction of what he is doing—establish as the law under which he lives the presence, power and manifestation of those mental and spiritual qualities which make for breadth of vision, for sympathetic understanding, for freedom from the superstitions, fears and delusions that are so persistently appealed to by all sorts of haphazard suggestions.

Uncontrolled susceptibility to debilitating suggestions is the great cause of human suffering, and it is this deplorable mental condition that makes evil and sin apparently such malevolent factors in the affairs of mankind. Sin is usually held to be actions in violation of the established moral or legal code under which one lives. This definition is not broad enough nor exact enough. Violations of the moral or legal code may be sin or may not be sin. Whether they are or are not cannot be determined by the actions, only by the states of mind that motive the actions.

It is likely that any radical violation of the established moral or legal code will bring restraint and suffering of a certain kind—the discomfort and restriction that is meted out to the criminal. But this may not be the suffering that is the result of sin. It may be to the individual the exaltation of the spirit that follows the highest form

of virtue—the momentary sacrifice of personal comfort and happiness that the common good may be the more fully served. Oftentimes the malefactors of one generation become the benefactors of the next.

The moral or legal code is most elastic and elusive—not a thing of inherent substance and determined meaning, but a framework on which are draped the garments of contemporaneous fashion. Therefore, it is altogether too naïve to conclude, because sin from one standpoint can reasonably be called the cause of sickness, that sick persons as a class are the worst of sinners, or that there is self-evident righteousness in physical health of itself. All suffering mortals are sinners, it is true, and they are suffering because they are sinners, but the sin from which they are suffering has nothing immediately to do with the Ten Commandments or other human laws and customs.

It is a misnomer to call the Ten Commandments the law of God, meaning thereby that they have in themselves fundamental and eternal reality. They are tremendously important because humanity attaches so much importance to them—at least, the part of humanity that most of us come in contact with. They serve a great practical purpose because humanity accords them great practical value. But God—the essential original, known through mental perception and spiritual realization—has no more to do with the Ten Commandments than He has to do with the law requiring automobiles to carry a red taillamp.

It is an impressive story that Moses went up a mountain and a Supreme Being handed him the Ten Commandments engraved on a stone, and if Moses told it for a purpose, he showed a keen knowledge of human nature in doing so. The Hebrews, like folks today, no doubt thought much

more of commandments which they believed came straight from an awesome God-Person, than they probably would of commandments which they knew came straight from Moses' own wisdom and experience.

The Ten Commandments are an epitome of the human conduct considered by Moses essential for the communal life of the times—a splendid summing up which has served a notable practical purpose ever since. But they are not the law of God for all that, and to violate them is not necessarily to commit the sort of sin that perpetuates a suffering humanity on the face of the earth.

This is not an argument for unrighteousness, but for intelligent living which will elevate the standard of righteousness higher and place it upon a more stable basis than the moral law has ever succeeded in doing. The great motive force behind the moral law has not been so much love of righteousness as fear of the punishment which might be inflicted for conduct displeasing to a God of wrath and revenge.

The dynamic appeal for rectitude has not been to intelligence, but to a selfish desire for personal salvation, with the alternative threat of an eternity of torment in the more or less literal fires of hell. One knows what is the effect on a child, or even on a dog, of a rule of fear and threat—how it makes for evil, for repression, cowardice, dishonesty, deception, hypocrisy, slyness, and a crafty determination to outwit control and do all the wicked things that have been forbidden.

Although apparently the child's revolt is against the rightful authority of the parent, the child's refusal to submit and be crushed by fear and unwarranted restriction is really the assertion of a proper self-respect and a manifestation of the dignity of individuality.

The assertion of individual rights may be done in the

wrong way, as is almost always the case, for the human being, young or old, is apt to jump from the freedom, which is the reward of moral courage, to the excess and license, which are the fruits of unwisdom. But assertion, even if out of proportion and shown in mistaken ways, is better and indicates more clearly the true spirit of man than no assertion at all.

Human conduct should be the spontaneous manifestation of an enlightened, normal and wholesome state of mind. The effort to make human conduct conform to the moral law, under the belief that what one does is the important thing instead of what one thinks, is both wrong and futile. Expression, never repression, is the function and life of man. Whatever tends to induce repression is a baneful influence, which sooner or later must be done away with.

Sin most assuredly brings suffering, not as a punishment, but as a powerful incentive to awake from mesmeric suggestions of sloth and ignorance. The sin that really is responsible for the awful burden borne by humanity is not, however, the kind of sin that is generally considered to be a moral lapse.

It is not usually regarded as at all serious, provided other things, ordinarily looked upon as the essentials, are becomingly observed—such things as conventional churchgoing, safe and sane citizenship, being good husbands, wives, parents and neighbors according to the accepted standards.

The sin referred to is the generally indulged in practice of not thinking—the common human habit of being unintelligent, unwise and ignorant, of being contentedly conservative and treading safely in the footsteps of the fathers, of following the routine of tradition and custom, of doing the things that always have been done, of believ-

ing the things that always have been believed, of mistaking prejudices for intelligent conclusions, of being without conviction because without discriminating thought-processes.

The non-thinkers, preyed upon and victimized by the whole paraphernalia of ecclesiastical, medical, political and social suggestion, are the sinners, and the awful punishment for their sins is the poverty and despair, the disease and death, of a fate-ridden humanity.

CHAPTER XI

Clairvoyance and Psychic Phenomena

Summary: The two meanings of the word clairvoyance—Reasons for inquiring into the claim that clairvoyance is the proof of supernatural interference in human affairs or of a power apart from the aspects of ordinary human living—Fondness of the human mind for the mysterious and mystifying—Thought reading is the universal human experience—It is the suggestion of the unusual and unaccustomed that attracts attention to clairvoyance—All personal mental processes are written in the lives of human beings and are open to inspection—Difference between human mind reading and the clarified vision of spiritual perception—Spiritualism relies exclusively on material sense testimony to prove its contentions—Why spiritualistic phenomena are bound to be trivial and personal and not a contribution to worthwhile human knowledge.

The word clairvoyance has two meanings. One is clear-sightedness or sagacity; the other is the gift or power, apparently natural to some persons and manifested by others only when in a hypnotic state, of discerning events not perceptible under ordinary circumstances and of penetrating or reading thought in unusual ways. Clairvoyance of the first kind is a normal and most desirable perspicacity and should be universally developed. Clairvoyance of the second kind is in somewhat doubtful repute, and around it cluster various claims of a deceptive and mysterious nature.

It is by no means uncommon to run across persons who have the faculty of perceiving happenings and conditions that are beyond and apart from the usual range of human sight and hearing. It is also not uncommon to find persons who have an uncanny way of discerning what

others are thinking. It is well known to experimenters in hypnotism that oftentimes persons under hypnotic control manifest a perceptive ability, which is beyond anything they consciously possess when they are free from the hypnotic suggestion that brought this ability into play.

There is no question that many human beings are capable of exercising in specific instances and under particular conditions perceptive and analytical powers beyond their ordinary experience. My interest in all this centers on the general opinion that under certain circumstances the presence of these extraordinary powers indicates a supernatural intervention, a spiritualistic or superhuman influence, or a special gift or endowment, and that they are more or less positive proof that there is such a thing as involuntary thought transference or uncooperative mind reading.

The human mind has an innate fondness for the mysterious, a sly delight in the uncanny and weird, and a tendency to relegate without adequate investigation everything that is a little different from its ordinary everyday experiences to the convenient realm of the supernatural. When some time has elapsed after taking such a view, humanity is easily convinced that any inquiries, which might disturb its now established belief in the supernatural—which would be likely to upset faith in mysteries that have become more or less tainted with the pseudo-sacred—would be of doubtful propriety and safer turned down than pursued.

According to popular belief, clairvoyance has to do with the unusual, and is therefore placed by the average human being under the protective coloring of the supernatural. Some believe it comes from God, and some believe that it comes from the devil, and many more agree

that it is probably dangerous to look into it too closely and sensibly.

Yet there is not a thing either mysterious or strange about clairvoyance, except the mystery and strangeness that it has in common with all human conditions, and certainly there is nothing supernatural about it. Everyone reads thought. He reads nothing else. There is, in fact, nothing else to be read. All humanity is constantly reading the minds of those who have passed away, but because the thoughts are printed in books, there is no temptation to believe that there is anything extraordinary in the process.

We are all continually reading the thoughts of our contemporaries, but because they come to us by word of mouth, or are written in letters or printed in newspapers and magazines, or are expressed by feature or gesture, we are sure that all this mind reading is natural and proper. Often in the bringing out of an invention, the fact of a common thought experience is proved by persons in different places, who working independently have hit upon the same idea and produced practically the same device almost simultaneously. Composers and authors are given to copying from each other unconsciously, and in consequence charging plagiarisms which cannot be proved to have been possible under the customary conditions of time and space.

Thought reading is the everpresent and universal experience. It is so common and so customary that no one pauses to think how really wonderful and inexplicable it is—in fact, how impossible it is from the standpoint of the theory of materialistic and mechanistic interaction. Only when the thought reading is apparently done in an unusual and unaccustomed way, does it attract

attention. Then the vein of the mysterious is tapped, and the presence of the supernatural is suggested.

It does not excite anybody to pick up a book and in this way read the author's mind, notwithstanding that this simple action is by no means the easiest thing in the world to explain. But let some one, who has a different kink in his sense perceptive faculties and limitations, read the author's mind without the book before him, and immediately there are violent speculations with delightful accompanying thrills and chills over the queer and strange, with claims and counter-claims for and against the powers of light and darkness.

A letter is received from a distant friend, and there is not the slightest concern shown because one knows what his friend is thinking about. But let him get the same news without letter or telegraph or telephone, and there is no explanation, according to the views of many, except that a supernatural power has been at work, an explanation which does not explain. To the illiterate savage a communication by letter is as mysterious and supernatural as a communication without a letter would be to some of us, and this although the savage himself has methods of sending important news over great distances and at amazing speeds, that have mystified and puzzled the civilized letter writers who have encountered demonstrations of the fact.

The meaning of it all is plain. What one is used to, he accepts as right and natural, and because it is right and natural, he concludes that it does not have to be bothered about, explained or accounted for. Only those happenings and experiences, which are outside the rules and regulations to which one subscribes, attract attention.

The immediate human instinct is to be suspicious of

them because they are different, to frown them down, and to cast them out as disturbing to the established order. If this course does not dissipate them, they are placed under the ban of being wiles of the devil, designed to lead astray the children of light. If they still persist, they are finally given a place in the ranks of the established and sanctioned, and become themselves the respectables of everyday human living.

While the particular phase of conscious mind reading under unusual conditions, known as clairvoyance, is no different in its essential nature from the mind reading which is the major portion of the human life-experience, there is, nevertheless, a distinct difference in the effect that the two sometimes have on the personal human being. Because it is so weighted with the atmosphere of the mysterious and peculiar, because it tends to make those who use it and come in contact with it regard themselves as especially endowed or as especially favored people set apart from their fellows by some sort of a divine intervention or decree, because it encourages the inconsistencies and exaggerations characteristic of the inflated personal ego, clairvoyance and its associations are likely to prove degenerating and even dangerously enervating influences to the mental and spiritual welfare of mankind.

This is not because there is in clairvoyance itself any essential evil more active or definite than in other human beliefs, but because most men and women find it impossible to experiment with the humanly strange and queer without an abnormal self-consciousness, which expresses itself in the absence of a sane sense of proportion.

Like all other human conditions, clairvoyance is a matter of personal belief. It is not an independent power. There is nothing about it which enables one person to penetrate another person's thought in a distinct, peculiar

and unpreventable way. Personal thinking so-called is forever open to inspection, because it is written for all to read in the lives that human beings are leading. Individuality, however, is self-contained and complete. It is not the prey of false suggestions, and it is not open to the perceptions of another unless the individual himself wishes it to be.

It is not true, therefore, that he who has sufficiently developed his clairvoyant powers can enter my mentality and yours at his pleasure and extract therefrom whatever he pleases. Such a condition would be an insufferable invasion of individual rights. The attainment and expression of true individuality is a sure defence against it. On the other hand, what one personally believes, that he personally is. No one can escape expressing his beliefs in his human living, and one's living is an open book to be read by those whose clairvoyance is synonymous with clear-sightedness and sagacity.

Apart from all phases of clairvoyance, and also apart from ordinary human thought transference, there is a mind reading or spiritual perception, expressed oftentimes in clarified vision regarding the human past, present and even future, which is the rightful possession and expression of the man who has learned to be really intelligent.

This is the inspired and prophetic mind reading characteristic of the spiritual seer and the illumined thinker. Its perceptions and conclusions are the normal products of an understanding of the truth, which has been logically and sanely developed by right thinking and sound deduction. This mind reading is never an infringement on individual rights and is never detrimental to those who use it or to those in whose behalf it is used. As men and women arrive at clearer perceptions of the unity of consciousness and of the universality of their common

interests, as they practically exemplify the brotherhood of man in their thinking and living, there will come a more definite manifestation and a more conscious utilization of this inspired mind reading. In consequence, there will be a diminishing belief in the value or usefulness of any inferior sort of mind reading.

Even when employed with the highest human motives and for promoting the most far-reaching human ideals, clairvoyance, the reading of one person's mind by another person, is not of sure advantage, is never positively reliable, and does not bring forth information that is of final worth. Like all personal sense testimony, the perceptions of personal clairvoyance must be interpreted by understanding. Taken at their face value, they are misleading and deceptive.

Without doubt, there is an immense amount of fraud and intentional deception carried on under the name of clairvoyance, but I am not dealing with that phase of the subject. To be fair in one's judgment, one must go behind frauds and conscious or unconscious deceptions, and find what there is in the proposition that makes even fraud and deception possible.

I would not go so far as to claim—indeed, I think that such a claim cannot soundly be made—that a fraud cannot be perpetrated unless a specific truth is thereby distorted or misrepresented; but it is quite evident that many gigantic frauds are perversions of legitimate human conditions and not straight inventions with no vestige of an accepted truism upon which to hang their pretensions. Certainly this is so regarding the frauds and deceptions connected with clairvoyance, and also of those connected with the phases of physical sense testimony classified under the general heading of psychic phenomena.

Undoubtedly there has been associated with the psychic and spiritualistic an immense amount of the intentionally fraudulent and deceptive, so much of it that many are inclined to look upon the whole business as a fraud. Such a view is superficial when it is not supercilious. A little impartial investigation will discover abundant instances of psychic and spiritualistic phenomena palpably free from intentional fraud and deception. They are honest material sense testimony, as honest and fair testimony as that cited to prove the actuality and quality of other material sense phenomena.

In considering spiritualism, under which practically all psychic evidences can be grouped, it must be remembered that spiritualism relies exclusively upon physical sense testimony to prove its theories regarding intervening psychic or supernatural influences, and to uphold its claims regarding the life after death and of definite communication between those who have departed and those who are still in the flesh.

This reliance on physical sense testimony is the irretrievable weakness of the spiritualistic proposition. It cannot be intelligently maintained that physical sense testimony by itself is ever proof of anything. Such testimony always has to be interpreted, and it always seems to the interpreter to mean what he interprets it to mean. But interpreters are fallible human beings, and progress is a great refuter of interpretations.

Furthermore, physical sense testimony cannot report anything outside its own physical cognizance and beyond the range of its own nature and quality. The only "spirit" world that it can testify to is one characterized by the same materialism that is the reality of life to the physical senses. The only concept of life after death that the phys-

ical senses can report is one made up of phases and forms of the same materialism which the physical senses subscribe to as true and real in the life before death.

On this account, one would expect most of the phenomena produced by the psychic and spiritualist to be trivial and personal, and such is the case. Table tippings, automatic writing, materializations if there are any wholly above suspicion, questions and answers on matters of minor personal interest, undoubtedly catch the attention of many and even cause some to feel convinced, though of what they may not be clear. But none of this really adds to the sum total of worthwhile human knowledge, and none of it is markedly instrumental in promoting human progress. Such things may be emotionally exciting, but they do not open to any extent the gates of uplifting inspiration nor provide much of an incentive for revelatory thinking.

The communications, supposed to come from those who have passed away, may appeal to some who receive them as reliable evidence that they have been actually in touch with the departed ones, but such communications have not been the avenues through which new and fresh views of the truth of being have reached humanity. They have not brought a deeper and richer philosophy of life, nor have they presented any features in their descriptions of the so-called life hereafter that are not of easily traceable human origin.

Wherever the attempt has been made to set forth in detail the life beyond the grave, nothing has been portrayed but the too evident imaginings and almost childish notions of materially minded human beings, whose heaven is a freshly painted and gorgeously decorated earth with the castes and classes of human living carried on through planes of supposedly progressive spiritualized being.

While a number of men and women of advanced thought have been interested in investigating, analyzing and classifying psychic phenomena for the satisfaction and benefit of us all, it is, nevertheless, to be expected that those who give themselves over unreservedly to psychic influences will not be as a rule of the highest grade mentally or spiritually, and that the effect of the psychical upon those who devote themselves unconditionally to it will be to enlarge their credulity and undermine their integrity. The psychic, who begins personally honest and reliable, is likely to yield after a time to the temptation to seem to do what is expected of him. This leads to habitual trickery and deception. When he does not succumb to this temptation, he is likely to degenerate into the pitiable mental state of seemingly uncontrollable susceptibility to suggestion.

As with clairvoyance so with other psychic phenomena, it is the unusualness of the occurrences that attracts attention and gives point to the theory of a supernatural intervention in the affairs of mankind.

Years ago, in the town of Scituate, Massachusetts, shortly after the Fox sisters had flooded the land with so-called spirit manifestations and spiritualistic speculations, an estimable woman of the community entertained and mystified her neighbors and friends by locking and unlocking a travelling bag, placed on the other side of the room where she could not physically touch it. There seems to be no question that the bag was actually locked and unlocked, and the popular explanation was that this was done by an accommodating spirit. Apparently the woman herself held the same opinion, and occasionally would speak with a voice supposedly that of an Indian squaw, to add conviction to the soundness of her belief.

Of course, if this woman had walked across the room

and locked or unlocked the valise with her own human hands, the neighbors would not have marvelled, nor would anyone have felt impelled to explain how she carried a hundred or more pounds of flesh over the floor, moved arm and hand towards the lock, and manipulated fingers to accomplish the purpose she had in mind.

All this would have been the usual procedure, therefore natural and not in need of an explanation. But how different to unlock the bag without first moving body, arm, hand, and fingers! To be sure, it is different in appearance, though the same in genesis. The human mind moves body and hand, and through them unlocks the bag. Why should not the human mind unlock the bag without first bringing the body and fingers into the conventionalized position? There is no real reason at all except the temporary one that it is not customary to do it that way.

Occasionally a human being will become convinced that he cannot move the body and fingers. He is said to be paralyzed. If he should suddenly change his conviction, get up and walk, which it is quite possible for him to do, notwithstanding that he does not know that it is possible, this would be considered by some almost as much of a marvel as unlocking a bag on the other side of the room without touching the lock with the fingers.

With the paralytic, spirits would not be called upon to account for the happening. Under certain circumstances, it would be termed a miracle, due to the direct intervention of a personal God. Yet what took place would not be a miracle, in the sense that there was an extraordinary divine interference in human affairs. The human mind had re-assumed the normal expression of control over the body, thus displacing the expression of an abnormal control that it had been manifesting under the influence of some non-intelligent suggestion. In the

instance of locking and unlocking the bag, the human mind was exercising a control, entirely normal to the particular and peculiar personal belief of the woman of Scituate. Spirits had nothing to do with it.

There is nothing in psychic phenomena to indicate anything essentially unlike other vagaries and beliefs of the human mind. Through physical training and mental development, human beings have been able to do most extraordinary and bewildering things. All of us today are accomplishing feats, which are natural to our mode of living, that a few years ago would have placed us among the magicians and sorcerers. The mystifying legerdemain of the Hindoo, like the legerdemain of the stage entertainer who claims no supernatural power, is doubtless commonplace enough after the veil of the unusual and unexpected is penetrated.

If one wants to do a thing enough to put in the hard work that will produce the mental conviction that he can do it, he will bring out in some measure the external effect that he desires. This, of course, can at present be proved only within the radius of immediate belief and understanding. The agility of the fingers of the violin virtuoso would be unbelievable, if one did not actually see it and hear the sounds that it makes possible.

Not a single thing has ever been forgotten by anybody. Many memories have dropped from conscious consciousness and therefore are not immediately discernible by the personal human being. He believes them forgotten, but they are there in consciousness just the same, and are open to the discernment of those sufficiently interested to hunt for them. Whether the one who hunts believes that he must become personally unconscious in a trance or under hypnotic control in order to find these forgotten details, does not matter. He finds them because he is

enough interested in that sort of thing to develop and train the ability to find them.

Spirits have no more part in it than they have in the reading of a book or a letter. The trance or hypnotic state of personal unconsciousness, which immediate belief may hold to be needful to accomplish the purpose, is merely a temporary point of view. There is no reason in the nature of things why the desired end should not be gained with a full personal consciousness of what is going on quite as well as through the clumsy medium of a trance or some other variety of hypnosis.

Communications from those supposed to be dead are really exposés of the beliefs, hopes and fears of those who are still present with us. It is not the mind or spirit of the one who has gone that is revealed, but the concepts and expectations of those who are here. It is not possible for spiritualism, in which is engrounded a conviction of the reality and inevitableness of the death process, to reveal anything new about life eternal, to which the death process must be an incomprehensible unreality.

The unreliability of material sense testimony, and the absurdity of appealing to material sense testimony to indicate or verify mental and spiritual concepts and realities, are the two rocks on which all the pretences of psychic theories and spiritualistic beliefs to final validity and soundness are sure to be wrecked.

The progressive development of the race has come through the painstaking efforts of those thoughtful and courageous individuals, who have striven to make practical in their daily lives the visions they have seen and the dreams they have dreamed in moments when inspiration and spiritual illumination have thinned the cloud of human customs and limitations. Those who have thus served the race have done so while they were here on earth with

the rest of humanity, or when their uplifting example has been recalled and made a present reality in the minds and hearts of those who are on earth.

The future and the beyond must always be suppositions, which may be speculated about, but which can never be really known. The only life that can be lived is that of the here and now. He who is tempted into fancies and theories about an imagined future must of necessity be robbing the present of the intelligent devotion that must be its portion if its fullest possibilities are to be realized.

CHAPTER XII

The Nature and Seeming Reality of Evil

Summary: Evil is not "good in the making"—Evil is another name for ignorance—Evil is a negative condition—To believe in the reality of evil is a species of insanity—Unsuccessful and successful evil-doers—The essential viciousness of evil—Conscious and unconscious viciousness of evil-doers—The reality and power of evil is in proportion to its deceptiveness—Deception is always self-deception—The price that is paid for trying to shift the blame for one's faults on other persons and things—The sense of impulsion and compulsion common to all human beings—The necessity of resisting it and proving one's individual freedom—Animal magnetism defined—How to overcome animal magnetism.

By evil one does not primarily mean evil deeds or wrong actions. Those are results. They are only incidentally evil—evil by determination, not necessarily, if ever, by nature. By evil one means the apparent condition or quality of mental darkness or ignorance or misconceiving, to which humanity is so prone—that *negative positiveness* in which the natural, wholesome, intelligent, sane functions and purposes of the mind seem to be perverted or quite non-existent.

Evil is not "good in the making." It sometimes seems to be that for two reasons. One is that some activities, which superficially seem to be evil because they are upsetting to the ruling concepts of the moment, turn out to be good. They tend towards human progress and betterment. The other reason is that many who express evil learn something good from the experience, and thus become less addicted to evil-doing.

Evil is nothing without an evil-doer. Evil is not an entity of itself any more than good is an entity of itself.

Evil is the external witness to somebody's state of mind —or, better yet, to some human being's lack of a state of mind. Evil is the effect of ignorance, and manifestly ignorance is not a state of mind. Ignorance is a negative condition. It is the absence of knowledge and understanding. It is analogous to darkness, which is not the presence of something but the absence of light.

Therefore, it is quite within the bounds of reason to say in answer to the question, Where did evil come from? that as a truth or a reality it never came at all. Evil is a mistake. One does not inquire where mistakes come from, and one could not find out if one did. There is no law of logic or reason governing mistakes. The mathematician recognizes at once that the presence of a mistake in his calculations is the unwarranted intrusion of a falsity. He wastes no time in fruitless questions about where it came from. He knows that it has no business there. He proves by correcting it that it is nothing that should be anywhere.

A mistake is a negation, an absence of that which is correct. So is evil. A negative cannot and does not come. It is there when the positive seems to be absent. Darkness does not come. The light comes and goes. Darkness is what is there to the extent that the light appears not to be there. Darkness cannot be measured nor judged by comparing it with darkness. It is darker or less dark in proportion to the amount of light that is discernible. If there were no light at all, darkness would not be perceptible. We should literally see nothing. We see because we are susceptible to light waves. It is the positiveness of light which makes darkness seem to be a positiveness.

Good is positive just as light is positive. Under the mental delusion of ignorance, good seems to be absent. It is then that evil has its apparent presence and reality.

But the nature of good, like the nature of light, is always the same—positive, never negative; and the nature of evil, like the nature of darkness, is always the same—negative, never positive.

Bring the tiniest spark of light to bear on the deepest darkness, and the light definitely dissipates the darkness. It is impossible for the darkness to crowd in on the light and put the light out. Similarly, the positive good, which is present when intelligence and understanding are active, eliminates the negative evil. Nor can the process be reversed in the case of good and evil any more than it can in the case of light and darkness. Evil does not crowd in on good and destroy it, notwithstanding that fallible human beings believe that evil has power, and also are continually finding out that what they consider to be good is by no means indestructible.

Evil is a delusion arising from a warped sense of proportion. To believe in the reality, goodness or divinity of evil, is a species of insanity, though far from being accounted such by mankind in general. It is insanity to hate. It is insanity to lie. It is insanity to fear. To feel any or all of these things, is to believe in the reality or the goodness of evil. Eliminate hatred, lying and fear from human consciousness by education in the meaning and practice of love, honesty and confidence, and a vast amount of evil that haunts and torments humanity would vanish.

Without a witness—a human being who is deceived into being a witness because he is ignorant of the truly real and worthwhile—evil is unknowable and consequently non-existent. The overcoming of evil is not accomplished by destroying or changing an outside entity or substance, but by overcoming and destroying the personal ignorance and the false sense of proportion, which

beset human beings and cause them to trick themselves into being witnesses for evil.

Some folks are greatly surprised to find that convicts are not at the bottom a different run of men and women from those who are not convicts. A visit to any prison will make it clear that there are not two varieties of humanity, those in jail and those out of jail. There is one sort of humanity. Some of that one sort are behind one kind of bars, and others of the same sort are behind another kind of bars.

Those behind the visible prison bars are by no means the only ones who are jailed. More often than not, those locked up in jails are but childish in their wickedness—primitive, elemental, obvious evil-doers, who are quick to suffer the obvious punishment consequent upon their childishness. They are an apparent and undeniable menace to the property and persons of their fellows, and locking them up is a heartily and readily agreed upon policy. But as conspicuous examples of the effects of evil-doing, they are in a way public benefactors, promoting, so it would seem, rather than diminishing the recognition of the true nature of evil. They plainly and dramatically prove the foolishness of evil-doing. They are unsuccessful evil-doers, and unsuccessful evil-doers always have a certain amount of worth in them.

It is the successful evil-doers who are dangerous. They are a lasting menace to everything except the established order, which more often than not they make it their particular province to uphold. They are dangerous because they are on the surface making a success of ignorance and a false sense of proportion. By their glorification and practical deification of the established and conventionalized, by their smartness and adroitness in manipulating the surface of things so that these appear in the

most favorable and attractive light to the willingly deceived mass of the thoughtless and irresponsible, they blind themselves and their envious and self-seeking contemporaries to the really good and true in the life experience.

They are the successful business men, who believe that the end and aim of business is to make a pecuniary profit. They are the successful politicians, who believe that the end and aim of politics is to keep themselves and their friends in profitable office. They are the successful religionists, who believe that the end and aim of religion is by hook or crook to get the world to accept some particular dogma or creed and follow faithfully the orthodoxy of some person or persons.

All such miss the rich meaning of life, the glory of progressive development, the divinity of inspiration, which vitalizing changes in the devitalized habits and customs of human beings bring to mankind. All these are ignorant of the beauties and joys of the venturesome spirit of man, ever carrying him forward towards the dawning promise of the unknown. They have a false sense of proportion, or they would not weigh in the scales of experience the deadness of material comfort and satisfaction against the aliveness of spiritual light and adventure. They do evil, when in their hearts, it may be, they intend to do only good.

One cannot safely take a child's judgment on the affairs of life. A child is without experience, and his judgments are based on personal prejudice and limited comprehension of life and its problems. They may be given with the best of intentions, but they are more apt to be bad than to be good, because they are the out-of-proportion whims of ignorance. They would feed one on candy when he should have bread and milk. They would send one

into the backyard to make mud-pies when he should be going to school.

There may be no viciousness of an intentional sort in the child's judgment, but there is viciousness in abundance and to spare in the effects brought about by the child's judgment. Evil is always vicious in its effects, but this does not mean that those who do the greatest evil are themselves consciously or intentionally vicious. In fact, the contrary is nearly always the case. The more consciously vicious an evil-doer is, the less inherently vicious is apt to be the evil that he does.

The reason for this is, in the first place, that the actual viciousness of evil is determined, not by the deed itself, but by the genuineness of the conviction that goes into the deed. Try as hard as he may to multiply the viciousness of his evil-doing, the consciously vicious evil-doer cannot possibly put into the evil that he does the same genuine conviction that is naturally and spontaneously embodied in the deed of one who conscientiously believes in the righteousness of his act.

In the second place, humanity does not like viciousness, and will instinctively turn from it when it discovers it. With the consciously vicious evil-doer, the viciousness is too apparent. The vast majority of mankind want none of it. The less consciously vicious the evil-doer is, the more deceptive is the evil that he does. His is evil masquerading as good. It is very likely earnestly believed to be good by those who are promoting it. It is accepted as good by many who are caught by its deceptive appearance. It is under such circumstances that evil is at the acme of its viciousness.

Whatever reality and power evil may seem to have is in proportion to its deceptiveness. Evil, which is known to be evil, is not a problem to any one, because then no-

body is deceived regarding the evil's true nature. No one believes that it is good.

Brought to the point of culmination by ignorance, the evil act is always consummated by some one who is deceived about the actual evil nature of evil.

This ignorance and deception is by no means ignorance and deception regarding the moral and social law. The man who robs a bank is probably as well acquainted with the moral law, "Thou shalt not steal," as anybody, and he is more than likely better acquainted than many others with the social law that he who robs a bank shall be imprisoned. But he goes ahead and robs the bank, knowing that he is both breaking the moral law and risking his own liberty.

Why does he do it? Because, notwithstanding acquaintance with moral and social codes, he is deceived as to the evil nature of evil. He is completely convinced that for him there is good in evil—that he will be personally benefited by doing evil, so much personally benefited that he is willing to take the risk of a period of incarceration for the small chance of getting the great good that he believes the robbery of the bank will bring him.

Of course, the point of view is absolutely indefensible. It could be held only by an insane person, but unfortunately it is such a general human point of view—not about robbing banks, but about every sordid, belittling, defiling, degrading and commonplace human activity—that it makes all human beings participators in the same insanity. They mistake evil for good, a mistake they could not and would not make if they were not deceived about the evil nature of evil.

Not for a moment, however, should one accept the insinuating and captivating suggestion that the evil itself, or somebody or something apart from one's self, is to

blame for the deception. If one is deceived, he deceives himself. If he is really honest in his search for it, he can usually find the point where his mental and spiritual integrity was sacrificed for personal or politic purposes.

It is speciously self-gratifying to shift the responsibility for one's failures, short-comings and wrong-doings to other shoulders, and "passing the buck," if a slangy vulgarity may be permitted for the sake of its descriptive vividness, is a pastime which brings out an immense amount of mental agility and ingenuity that could be better employed.

The price one pays for this sort of self-gratification makes the bargain a bad one. It costs him the loss of any dominion over evil. One can rule his own mentality, its habits and beliefs, if he can get well enough acquainted with himself to know his own mentality and what his habits and beliefs are. It is not an easy task, to be sure, but at least there is a possibility. To attempt to get the better of a myriad of complex mental influences and suggestions poured in from the outside, each one with the power inherent within itself to govern and control if it catches one unawares—this is verily the most hopeless of all hopeless tasks.

If dominion over evil is not gained to the degree that understanding and dominion of one's self is gained, then there is no reasonable expectation of ever overcoming evil. If, for the petty satisfaction of an egotistical self-righteousness, one commits the fundamental blunder in tactics of making the law for himself that he is the unwitting victim of an outside evil, what chance of freedom from evil can there be for him until he changes his viewpoint and annuls the law under which he has placed himself?

It is said that the ignorant Southern negro, when taken to task for some delinquency such as not com-

ing to work after agreeing to do so, has a trick of excusing himself by saying, "My mind told me to do something else." It is plain that the only "mind" that told him anything was his constitutional determination not to work if he could avoid it. Yet who among us does not know exactly how the negro feels, and how accurately his statement, "My mind told me," describes this feeling? We may recognize quite clearly that it is the perversity and wilfulness of our own nature and mental habit, which is dominating us to our disadvantage and even distress. Nevertheless, we are as prone as the ignorant negro to dodge the direct responsibility by blaming, if not "my mind," everything and everybody in sight except ourselves.

One effect of this indulgence is to bring more or less persistently into the personal life experience a sense of impulsion or compulsion that has an increasing tendency to force men and women, so it seems, into states of mind and physical conditions that are not to their liking and sometimes to their sorrow and embarrassment.

An instance in illustration is the mental and physical situation of one who wilfully becomes addicted to the use of narcotic drugs. Before he begins to take drugs, he is consciously in possession of his volitionary powers. For excitement, out of curiosity, or because of plain, unadorned asininity, he begins to take drugs. At first, control of the situation is consciously in his own hands, but after a time, continuing a useless, uncalled for, unintelligent practice, the conscious control slips away from him. Then step by step, first the fear, then the conviction, that the drug has control over him, gains possession of his mentality, and the reign of compulsion, to which we have referred, is on, apparently forever so far as he is able to discern to the contrary.

The sense of compulsion has a tendency to become connected through the psychological process called "association of ideas" with all persons and things coming into our environment. If we are thrown in contact even comparatively little with certain persons, the compulsion-suggestion is likely to assert itself with arguments of duties and responsibilities towards these persons. If the persons are members of our own household, the insistence of the suggestion is magnified, until in many cases it becomes a torturing and dwarfing tyrant.

Also, if we carry on our affairs long enough in a certain way, there develops a feeling of compulsion to continue to carry them on in the same way indefinitely. Changes and revisions get to be hazards of fortune if not positive iniquities, and strong, persistent argument is required to convince ourselves that new enterprises and different activities are not a verging on the immoral and a flying straight in the face of a beneficent Providence by a wild worship of the goddess Chance.

Although the whole trend of the compulsion is to hold humanity to habits and routine doings, some of them of the humanly exemplary sort, others quite the opposite—habits and routine that have grown on men and women through their own persistency in promoting them—it usually seems to the struggling human being that it is his purpose to progress and develop that is being thwarted by a power operating quite apart from his will or desire.

He feels forced, compelled, governed, against his will by something outside that makes him do its will. The drunkard believes that it is the drink that holds him. The drug fiend believes that it is the drug that holds him. The clerk, who has a small job and wants a bigger one, believes that it is the employer or the circumstances that are holding him back. When a woman is so constituted, as

are many housewives, that she must clean house about so often and in just such a way, it is hard for her not to feel overwhelmingly certain that it is the house that compels the cleaning.

With the impulsion and compulsion apparently coming so insistently and persistently from the outside, it is not strange, until one learns better, that he should consistently be fooled into believing that somebody or something is to blame for his failures and short-comings. So the "alibi" is adopted into the slang of the day to characterize the habit of putting the blame on persons or conditions.

The standard among those who play games—usually a higher and more idealistic one than that of the more important game of intelligent living—accounts it far from good sportsmanship to indulge an "alibi" propensity. In games it is recognized that neither the ball nor the bat is to blame for the failure to make a hit. There is no more place for the "alibi" in the business of living than there is in the playing of a game. It is not those who lie down under the sense of compulsion, who accept as valid the argument of being impelled by an outside power, that amount to something in doing the world's work and add their mite to the sum total of human progress. Those who yield to this claim of compulsion are the weaklings and the failures.

Only those who meet the argument and refuse to acknowledge an outside *must* as final, who struggle to overcome the compulsion, are the upstanding and successful men and women of the race. They find out from experience that the battle is not with an outside influence at all, but is between the dual elements in their own natures—between thinking and not thinking, between the spiritual and the sensual, the idealistic and the materialistic. They learn that the impulsion and compulsion they

feel is the externalization of the mental conditions within themselves. It is the compulsion of habit, custom, routine and personal belief, holding them to established lines and resisting the impulse of mind and spirit towards new ground and higher levels of mental and spiritual experience.

The compulsion that one either yields to or resists is his own perversity and wilfulness expressed in characteristic lines or modes of suggestion, which for no intelligent reason, by mere chance only, have got going and tend towards perpetuation in his human living. Their way is to continue to swing under the impulse of inertia the circle of their belief until checked and destroyed by the individual's successful insistence upon his right to freedom.

Man should be constantly manifesting unimpelled and spontaneous right activity of both mind and body. To the extent that he is doing this, he is conscious of freedom of choice, of definitely making his choice and putting into action that which he chooses. There is an expanding sense of dominion and of the worthwhileness of living. When one is under the sense of compulsion, there is little or no apparent freedom of choice. Both dominion and the joy of accomplishment seem to be lost.

However, this sense of the loss or absence of good is deceptive and false. Freedom of choice is never and can never be abrogated. He who fails to rise against and master the suggestion of compulsion chooses not a whit less not to rise, than he who, opposing the evil suggestion, chooses not to be compelled. The drug addict as much chooses to be a drug addict, as when, aroused to a comprehension of the situation as it actually is, he chooses no longer to continue a drug addict.

It is easier to grasp the theoretical rightness of an ever-

present freedom of choice than it is to keep the conviction of a freedom of choice when confronted with specific cases of apparent bondage to outward circumstances. The lazy man or woman, the drunkard, the irresponsible and inefficient, seem simply to drift like flotsam and jetsam with the tide.

We ask ourselves again and again if this tragedy of ignorance, perverseness and wilfulness is just as much chosen as is the well-done of wisdom, broad-mindedness and intelligence.

Each of us will find the answer to the question within himself, if he looks for it honestly and sincerely. He will find that it is often his own inexcusable misadventure to fail to choose for himself definite identification with the highest quality of mental activity of which he is capable. He will find that it is often his tendency, through indulging a mistaken sense of ease or self-satisfaction, to choose to lapse into the suppositional realm of not thinking. He will find that when he does this, he becomes at once the prey of suggestion and compulsion—forced this way and that by personal temperament and bringing up, by the personalities of others, by so-called laws, by circumstances and environment, by every imaginable thing to which can be attached a sense of reality and power.

The term that is often used to designate this contradictory and glamorous sense of compulsion is animal magnetism. It is a good term in that it indicates both the nature and mode of all evil suggestion—the nature animalistic or sensual, the mode mesmeric or suggestive.

There is, however, a characteristic human tendency, which must be watched out for, if this designation of evil as an apparently active factor in the affairs of mankind is to serve a useful purpose by clarifying the perception

of the unreality of evil. This is the tendency which all of us have of letting the "mystery of iniquity" become a mystification with the same weird fascination for the sensation-loving side of our humanity that is found in ghost stories and spooky plays.

Animal magnetism is not a mystery nor a mystification, is not a strange, uncanny influence grabbing one at inopportune times and in unexpected ways, is not the personal devil of old theology under another guise. It is, in fact, distinctly a commonplace, ordinary, everyday affair. So far as it has any useful meaning, the term animal magnetism refers to that universal impulse of basic human nature—the magnetism or mesmerism of the animal instincts, or carnal mind as Paul put it, which if given full sway in human living bring out wilful, unprincipled, degraded, perverted, unwholesome conditions and experiences.

Animal magnetism, like all evil suggestion, is met and overcome, not by any conventionalized process or method, but by learning to think intelligently and to live wholesomely and sanely, by trying to the best of one's ability to make each day count as a step forward in the attainment of increased dominion over the limitations, restrictions and repressions, forced on one's attention by the customs, conventions and established opinions of the times.

CHAPTER XIII

Sensuality, Superstition and False Law

Summary: It is impossible to cope with evil when it is looked upon as an expanding, developing element—Evil cannot be explained—Evil must have a witness—How a child is sometimes tricked into being a witness for evil against himself—How the average materia medica physician in the same way acts against the best interests of his patients—The way to get at the evil nature of evil is to reduce evil to its lowest terms—Sensuality and superstition are the background of all evil suggestions—Sensuality is the claim that evil is good—Superstition is the claim that evil has power—A consideration of astrology and the laws that are associated with it—An explanation of their apparent potency in human affairs—How safety or salvation from sensuality and superstition is gained.

To try to follow the ramifications of evil as if its claims of expansion and development were valid is always a foolish proceeding. It means a wild and confusing chase into complexities and perplexities that defy sane classification and analysis. The reason for this is that there are no laws of logic and consistency governing evil. If there were, evil would have an intelligent cause for being. Then its nature would not be evil but good.

Who can explain why a trusted bank official, whose life has been one of honor and probity, ever becomes a defaulter? All reason and all logic and all sense are against such a thing occurring. Yet it does occur in the madness of human living, and it is quite as inexplicable and intelligently impossible after it has taken place as it was before it took place. It is also more often than not just as incomprehensible, after it is too late, to the defaulter himself as to the friends, who believed him a man worthy of their fullest confidence.

Evil cannot be explained nor reasonably accounted for. A superficial outlining of momentary cause and effect according to the theory temporarily in vogue regarding human conduct and motives is not an explanation. Neither can it be soundly predicted what forms evil will take and what the consequences of its indulgence will be. Evil is not a concrete, definite thing to be labelled and filed away for reference purposes. Evil is always somebody's evil-being, and it is superlatively evil or only comparatively evil according to the immediate mental quality of the evil-doer. This quality is not necessarily his viciousness. It is more likely his ignorance and the degree that he is deceived as to the evil nature of evil.

There is no such thing as a science of evil, and therefore no such thing as a scientific investigation or understanding or knowledge of evil. One might as well expect to master the principle of mathematics by studying a method that pretended to teach all the possible mistakes in arithmetic and the reasons for making them, as to expect to master the art of living by studying the eccentricities of evil and trying to find rules and regulations that will thwart them or bring them into orderly arrangement.

Yet with all that as it is, not once in a while but almost continually, all of us are tricked into being not only the prophets and witnesses for evil, but the actual determinators of what the evil manifestation shall be, where it shall appear, whether it shall continue for a longer or shorter period, if it shall quickly vanish or shall carry through to the bitter tragedy of apparent accomplishment.

Some person always testifies to the reality and power of evil. Some person always gives the line of its suggestive development. Evil cannot testify to its own reality and power, and it cannot determine the mode of its own development. Someone makes the choice between testi-

fying for evil and against good, or for good and against evil. Good does not testify for itself any more than evil testifies for itself. Somebody must be the witness—either a witness for good with power because the essential quality of good is positive, or a witness for evil without final validity because the essential quality of evil is negative.

Insinuatingly indeed is one beguiled into the negativeness which makes him a false witness against his own happiness and freedom and against the happiness and freedom of others. Often this false witnessing is put into the mind of a child through the inadvertence of parents, teachers and kindly disposed friends. They may magnify the child's self-esteem in unwarranted fashion, or they may turn the child's thought into the tormenting by-ways of self-condemnation and depression in equally unwarranted fashion.

Perhaps the parent, because the child may not be as quick on occasion in doing his sums as the parent thinks he should be, lets fall the remark that the child has no ability in arithmetic. The evil and limiting suggestion, dropped into the fertile soil of the child mind, is accepted as true, and continues to bring forth its fruit of failure and suffering until it is destroyed by an intelligent perception of its unreality.

In the vast majority of such instances—and they can be found time and time again in the bringing up of children, not only in connection with school work, but in every field of child interest—the child is normally as capable in the work regarding which he has accepted a suggestion of limitation as in other work that he does exceptionally well. The fault is not the child's capability. The child's seeming limitation is the deceptive and disastrous effect that is bound to follow when anyone unwittingly allows

himself to be tricked into being a witness for evil—in this case an evil claim of limitation on the child's all-around intelligence.

An immense amount of similar false witnessing is done by materia medica physicians. For the sake of the immediate betterment of humanity and a decided lessening of sorrow and suffering, it is unfortunate that those, to whom so many men and women go for help when they are sick, do not realize the untoward effects they continually produce on their patients by their more or less dogmatic attitude towards disease and their prophecies about it.

There are, of course, notable and honorable exceptions —physicians who have discovered that hopefulness, courage, the confident expectation of healing and health, are far more likely to make sick persons well than are the opposite states of mind. They labor most assiduously and successfully to engender these healing states of mind in their patients and in themselves.

But materia medica physicians in general believe too zealously and blindly in the truth of their theories regarding the reliability of a diagnosis of physical symptoms. They are too satisfied with their text-book analyses and classifications of disease. They are too sure how certain types of disease are going to act, and they are too well trained in the extraordinary attitude that to prophesy death and have a patient recover is no disgrace, while to prophesy recovery and have a patient die is some sort of a reflection on their medical knowledge and skill.

In short, they are too academically and professionally self-conscious as a class to look beyond their conventional and therefore necessarily antiquated training and their comfortably stabilized schoolroom authority. They are wonderfully good and devoted human beings, but their persistent ignoring of the obvious influence, which their

own mental attitude and that of their patients has on physical symptoms and conditions, is amazing.

Turning from the swamping suggestions of the expansiveness of evil, claims which would most assuredly drive one to a belief in evil's infinity and everpresence if he permitted himself to accept them, it is possible, by the process of reducing evil to its lowest terms, to make some progress in the direction of awakening one's self to the evil nature of evil, and with some definiteness to analyze and comprehend the truth about evil and its deceptive and limited nature. In this way the primary elements of evil can be uncovered, and it can be seen why they get such a hold on the imagination. Moreover, it can be ascertained what are the states of mind which tend towards immunity from the blandishments and terrors of evil suggestion.

Looked at as an expanding entity, evil would seem to spread hither and thither throughout all human living like the expanding circles on the smooth surface of a lake after a stone has been thrown into the water. Brought back to its beginnings in the mentality of somebody who has been deceived into being a witness for its claim of reality and power, held to an inquiry into its elemental quality, at the same time watching out lest one be shocked, glamored or fascinated under the repeated and insistent attacks of its appalling, ingratiating and mentally paralyzing suggestions, it is possible with fair reasonableness to trace the genesis of all evil to a few simple and quite comprehensible mental influences.

It has been pointed out that evil must have a witness to speak and act for it, to testify by word and deed to the validity of its claims. Somebody must do evil, or there is no evil done. When there is no evil done, evil is nonexistent. It is a serious matter for the one concerned to

be a witness for evil. It means either deceptive success in human affairs, plunging one deeper and deeper into the mire of unintelligent conventional human living, or it means suffering, by far the better thing to happen to one who has been trapped into making a reality of evil.

Suffering does not come because one is evil or as a punishment inflicted on one for doing evil. When there is no conflict within the mentality, there is no suffering from evil thinking or doing. Suffering follows evil doing because the evil-doer is really better or more intelligent than the evil which he does, and consequently there is a conflict between his mind or character and his deeds. Under such conditions, it is the life necessity that the misrepresentation of thinking and living presented by the evil-doer shall cease. The witness for evil suffers because he is not himself and is unendurable to himself.

The fact that there is always a personal witness for evil does not make evil a person. Consequently, killing or taking vengeance in any way on the person of the evil-doer does not destroy the evil. Evil is always somebody's mistaken point of view. The only way that evil can be overcome and eliminated is by educating out of his false belief the tricked witness for evil's supposed presence and power. This is done by making him a witness for that which is good, true and real.

He is educated by an awakening appeal to his mind and heart, not by taking him to different places or trying to keep him from old associates. I am referring to a permanent transformation or reformation, not to practical measures that may be temporarily necessary. His point of view, ideals and convictions must be changed. He must come into truer realizations and more uplifting perceptions. Selfishness must be banished, and self-interest must be rationalized. Then, though the places and the

persons remain the same, the individual's reaction to them will be entirely different.

Countless are the human tragedies that have followed the illusion that by the destruction of persons and things or by changes of environment evil can be eradicated. Nothing less revolutionary than a change of mind and spirit has any effect on evil, for evil is not a self-sustained entity. It is an ignorance, a deception, a delusion, witnessed for by some one unfortunate enough to be in an ignorant, deceived, deluded mental state—in other words, by one who on the particular matters involved is insane.

It seems clear that under its own name, with its nature plainly evident, evil has no deceptive element. Known for what it is, evil does not appeal to any one. It must be masked to seem attractive. Not until you and I accept at some point the false belief that evil is good and therefore not evil at all—and we constantly do accept this false suggestion in spite of being entirely aware of any moral and ethical violations that may be involved in the procedure—are we in danger of coming under the spell of evil. The primary evil suggestion is the appeal of pleasure and gratification made through the five physical senses. This is known as sensuality.

By sensuality is not meant especially or particularly sex gratification or indulgence. That is a phase of sensuality, overemphasied by our present social conventions and customs, but it is by no means the whole of sensuality. Any unreasonable, useless, unnecessary and unwise physical sense indulgence for the sake of the animal pleasure felt therein is primitive or elementary sensuality, whether the senses thus gratified are the sight or hearing, the taste, touch or smell. In a more subtle and complex form, sensuality is the gratification of abnormal desires for position, possession and power. It is through some of

these sensual appeals that evil appears attractive, and it is through the sensual appeal that evil gains or appears to gain the ascendency over one.

Sensuality, the belief of pleasure or good in evil, has an inseparable companion. This companion is fear—first, fear that the good, which apparently has been found in evil, the sense gratification, may be lost or that one may be circumvented in the enjoyment of it; second, when the terrifying threat of the claim that evil has power is felt, the fear that the deadly grip of sensual indulgence cannot be destroyed.

The acceptance of the primary delusion about evil, that it is good, combines with it the necessity of accepting the resulting belief, that evil has power to dominate and to inflict suffering, that evil can add to life and take away from life. When this point is reached, one becomes the prey of the second great deception regarding the true nature of evil—the belief in evil laws and consequences. The name for this claim is superstition.

Evil is deceptive only when it comes in the name of good or when the false claim that evil has power to bring either pleasure or suffering is believed. Therefore the basic suggestions, which delude mankind into becoming witnesses for evil, are sensuality and superstition.

According to the dictionary, superstition is an excessive reverence for, or fear of, that which is unknown or mysterious. In our common usage, we are wont to call superstition only that which we have discovered to be absurd and unreasonable. But we are constantly finding out that what is superstition to one person is a profound conviction of truth to another.

Such a notion as that dropping a fork on the floor is a sign that there will be company to dinner, is generally seen to be superstition and nothing else. It is recognized

that there can be no positive law of consequences attached by the nature of things to so trivial an occurrence as the dropping of a fork. It is readily perceived that to attach fixed consequences to a circumstance, which cannot be a reasonable or valid cause, is superstition.

When, however, the condition, to which consequences are attached, is a religious belief or doctrine—for example, such a belief as that of transubstantiation, regarding which churchmen quarrel—it is by no means an easy matter to get an agreement as to what is truth and what is superstition.

The superstitious habit or belief extends beyond the obvious—occurrences like dropping forks, sitting thirteen at the table, walking under ladders, or even disputed religious dogmas and creeds. All of us have accumulated through race association and personal bringing up a mass of beliefs and habits, plainly superstitious, but governing us surreptitiously with amazing completeness and consistency.

For example, there is a pseudo-science called astrology, which claims that human lives and events are influenced and determined by the stars, and that personal character and experience, indeed all terrestrial affairs, can be accurately determined, and their future scientifically foretold, by studying the positions of the stars and deducing the predestined conclusions therefrom.

Astrology is one of the oldest of mankind's speculations, and as the forerunner of astronomy it has an honorable place in the story of mankind's progressive development. The ancients believed in it thoroughly, though when the Bible says that Abram came out of Ur of the Chaldees, who were famous star-gazers, it may mean that even as long ago as that a clearer concept of the truth—Abram's

Most High God—had cast a doubt on the soundness of the astrological theory.

Be that as it may, astrology was genuine science to the Chaldeans, the Egyptians, the Greeks, down to the educated Europeans of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Even today it is implicitly believed in by some, wondered at and speculated about by a good many more, but classified as superstition by the vast majority. In this instance the majority is right. Astrology is superstition, requiring for its acceptance and practice the same sort of credulity found in the old-fashioned weather prophet, who examines the fur of a rabbit or the skin of an onion to find out what kind of a winter it is going to be.

Yet there are peculiar things about astrology and so-called astrological laws which cannot be dismissed with a sneer. Astrology claims that the dominant traits of human beings are fixed by the position of the stars at the time of birth, that a human being born in a certain month will have the characteristics that astrological lore says belong to that month, that by knowing the exact time of a person's birth, his temperament and life experience can be outlined with considerable accuracy.

With unusual unanimity, intelligent men and women have a conviction that these claims of astrology are not reasonable. They show this conviction by not bothering about the matter at all. But here is a surprising thing. If any one will take the trouble to look up in an astrological chart the characteristics that are supposed to be predominant in persons born at the same time that he was born, he is quite likely to find a decided resemblance to peculiarities and tendencies of his own. Knowing nothing of astrological beliefs and skeptical regarding them, he has, nevertheless, unconsciously been expressing a dis-

position more or less in line with astrological laws and claims. How is this to be accounted for?

The solution brings us to another phase of the claim of superstition. No matter how absurd of itself a superstition may be, if any human being becomes thoroughly convinced of its power and truth, he will have in his personal experience abundant physical sense testimony to justify him in his superstitious belief. If enough human beings agree in accepting as valid a superstitious suggestion, their united experience will continue to be convincing regarding the reasonableness of their belief as long as they continue to hold that particular point of view.

If, for instance, one had the genuine, through and through conviction—a conviction so solid that it became the law that he had made governing his human experience —that dropping a fork meant company to dinner, he would surely have company to dinner every time he dropped a fork, and the condition would continue until he intelligently freed himself from the bondage of such a silly law.

Astrological claims are laws of this same sort. They are probably the oldest of all human attempts to classify and tabulate coincidences in terms of cause and effect. They are the original system of consequences, a system now vastly expanded in the so-called laws of materialistic science, materia medica and ecclesiastical religion. Although most of us repudiate the astrological decrees in our conscious mentality, we all of us have the belief in them more or less ensconced in the still dark and undisclosed regions of mental action and reaction that go to make up our human character and personality. In this unconsciousness or subconsciousness, they are still laws for us, and we, in consequence, unwittingly and unknow-

ingly follow out with considerable accuracy their unresisted demands.

None of this is either the proof that the demands are what they claim to be, laws of intelligent being, or the indication that mankind is or need be under their domination and control. All it means is that any dominant suggestion will apparently force its requirements, and thus seem to rule the one yielding to the suggestion, so long as it is permitted to go unchallenged by a more vital and fundamental understanding of truth and reality.

Safety or salvation from sensuality and superstition is not gained by any sort of artificial fight or protective method against the assault of an enemy supposed to come upon its victim from the outside. The only gates through which sensual and superstitious suggestions enter are the five physical senses of each one of us. It is the testimony of our own material senses that must be well scrutinized by the intelligence of each of us.

The only power that sensual and superstitious suggestions have is that bestowed upon them by the so-called laws of cause and effect which each of us consciously or unconsciously makes for himself, and to which he yields unswerving obedience until he learns better. The only self-hood that can become a witness for sensual and superstitious suggestions is that personality, which each of us calls his own—that strange embodiment of self-will, self-justification, self-love, self-pity and self-righteousness, which is so readily preyed upon and played upon by envy, jealousy, hatred, malice and revenge.

Safety and salvation are a living reality, found and possessed in proportion as each one of us succeeds in being what he truly is—not a person of moods, passions and prejudices, but an individual, who is free from dominating suggestions because he is thinking for himself.

CHAPTER XIV

Ecclesiasticism and Materia Medica

Summary: Ecclesiasticism and materia medica are the complete materialistic plan of salvation—Ecclesiasticism is called the savior of the soul, materia medica the savior of the body—How each fails to make good its claims—The battle with ecclesiasticism is not a war against men and women, but against the system of which ecclesiasts are the worst victims—Immediate abandonment of ecclesiasticism and materia medica is not practical—The unstable basis of superstition on which materia medica rests—Inconsistencies in the modern physician's attitude towards the past—The effect of cleaner living on the dirt diseases—Materia medica's inability to cope with the fear diseases—How the seeming effects of drugs are produced—Real purpose of sanitation and hygiene—The coinciding functions of the true religionist and the true physician.

Men and women, who think for themselves and examine various aspects of conventional human living with a certain amount of impersonal intelligence, are bound to perceive the short-comings of ecclesiasticism and materia medica and to question some of their sweeping generalizations.

This does not always mean that those who criticize and question believe that there is no place for ecclesiasticism and materia medica in the present human order. Even those who grant them preeminent essentiality sometimes recognize a proneness on the part of both ecclesiasticism and materia medica to step outside of where they legitimately belong and to make the unfortunate mistake of trying to secure a controlling hand in all human affairs.

If ecclesiasticism and materia medica have their place in the primary school of human living, where training of a definite kind and discipline of an obvious sort are per-

haps necessary—and many persons are decidedly of this opinion—they certainly prove to be of decreasing helpfulness as the primary school stage of human experience is outgrown. In the college and university grades of human living, their formalities and restrictions are continually found to be detrimental to individual culture and growth.

It should be clearly comprehended that to attack the systems of ecclesiasticism and materia medica, the claims and the philosophy of the systems, to expose their absurdities and deceptions, is not to attack the sincerity and good faith of the men and women who thoroughly believe in ecclesiasticism and materia medica and practise them with the highest ideals of service. As a class, the clergy and the doctors are honorable persons who are worthily honored by their fellows. Their predominating motives have been and are to help and save humanity. They have marvellous and inspiring records of self-sacrificing devotion. They have made love and peace a reality to many a sufferer. Mankind in its present stage of development would find it well-nigh impossible to get along without them.

But to claim that the clergy and doctors are correct in their ecclesiastical and materia medica views and practices, because they are honest and self-sacrificing in their human lives, is another matter altogether. There are fair arguments to show that they are not always correct in their views. It is reasonable to ask a hearing for the case against their beliefs, and at the same time to insist that the brief in opposition to ecclesiasticism and materia medica be seen for what it actually is—a contention that the systems are not fundamentally sound in theory and practice and not in any respect an attack on those who believe in, uphold and try to live according to the systems.

Ecclesiasticism and materia medica form the complete and perfect materialistic scheme of salvation for all mankind, and to the human mind they are the one thoroughly satisfactory and becoming plan of salvation. Their processes vary in detail according to place and tribe, but their nature remains the same. So worthy are they, according to the customary human view, that no one gets into disrepute through a faithful following of them, provided he is bright enough to select the varieties that are dominant where he happens to be.

According to the generally accepted materialistic theory, a human being is a combination of the spiritual and material, and therefore needs both spiritual and material salvation. To ecclesiasticism is delegated the task of saving the spiritual part of him, the soul, and to materia medica that of saving the material part, the body.

They both set about the task in strikingly similar fashion. They provide two distinct methods, both, however, with the same purpose—that of making it unnecessary for the human being in need of salvation for either soul or body to do any thinking for himself.

A few selected mortals are especially trained in theological and medical schools to do the speculating for the race on the essentials of soul and body salvation, while the responsibility of the rank and file of humanity ends with obedient submissiveness to the constituted authority of the scholastically qualified.

This assumption of authority and waving away of individual and personal responsibility suit the great majority of humanity so well that they are the dominant reasons why ecclesiasticism and materia medica are so generally accepted by mankind as sound and necessary and clung to so tenaciously in spite of their repeated failures to bring to suffering humanity either marked spirit-

ual solace or enduring physical relief. The promises of their ingenuous theories of irresponsible perfection are so alluring, and the assumed finality of their systems is so immediately assuring, that humanity cannot bear to face honestly their consistent failures and their untoward influences on mental integrity.

With materia medica, of course, failure is both self-evident and self-acknowledged. Materia medica is honest in this. It admits that in the end disease is certain to be the winner. It holds out some hope of keeping the enemy at bay for a time, but it promises little or no real gain in the elimination of disease or even of markedly enlarged ability to control it except under the most favorable professional auspices.

Against the final and eternal inevitableness of the death process, it takes no stand whatsoever. When certain unfavorable conditions are present, or when one is so unfortunate as to have certain physical symptoms, materia medica not only regards death as necessary but as lawful and right. When that point is reached, it surrenders hands down and passes any further interference with what it calls the laws of nature over to ecclesiasticism.

The failure of ecclesiasticism really to meet the human need is not so immediately evident as is that of materia medica. Ordinarily, ecclesiasticism does not have to promise much for the present, provided it emphasizes strongly enough the comforting assurance that one will be all right through the eternity of a suppositional future. On account of this, which is its peculiar speciality, ecclesiasticism has the tremendous advantage over materia medica of not being called upon to make good its promises or to explain away its short-comings.

However, there is abundant practical exemplification of the unhappy effects of the ecclesiastical concept on

those who accept it at its face value and conscientiously try to fulfill its requirements. They make it clear enough that, whatever it may do for us after we are dead, ecclesiasticism does not add to our mental and spiritual strength and growth while we are alive.

Left to its own devices, without the unwilling leaven which free scientific and religious investigation forces upon it, ecclesiasticism is always reactionary and despotic. It is distrustful of any who are outside the charmed circle and whose overwhelming self-interest does not bind them to it both in mind and in spirit. The masses it instinctively keeps in the fetters of ignorance and under the glamor of the mysterious, always, so it argues, for their own present good and future salvation.

Its ideal is not broad and enlightening education and research, so that the whole body may become intelligent thinkers and thereby capable of acting individually and independently with wisdom in the uplifting work of getting at the basic truth of being. The intent and purpose of ecclesiasticism, hidden behind a veil of sentimentality and sanctimoniousness, are to perpetuate a mentally inert mass of blindly obedient children, who will accept without question anything that is told them under the guise of ecclesiastical authority and unhesitatingly do as they are bid.

The result is that ecclesiasticism provides a ridiculously easy road to power and influence for the comparatively few who care or dare to seize the ecclesiastical machinery for their personal profit and gain. Consequently, the ecclesiastical hierarchy is as much a part of the ecclesiastical paraphernalia as are the dogmas and creeds, the pomp and ceremonial, by which ecclesiasticism makes its most direct and effective popular appeal.

An ecclesiastical hierarchy would not be of any account,

if it did not endow itself with a definite and practically infallible authority from God Himself, by virtue of which it is where it is and on account of which its rulings and decrees become inferentially omnipotent and divine in their import and importance. This means that some human beings arrogate to themselves a divine quality that does not belong to them and which in the state of mind that possesses them they cannot express, while other human beings abrogate an individual freedom, the keeping of which is necessary to their happiness and sanity.

It is of no moment to declare as an argument in favor of the system that the human beings, who compose an ecclesiastical hierarchy, mean well and are laboring conscientiously day and night for the good of their fellow human beings. No amount of personal goodness can overbalance the evil of a point of view, which would make impossible the only salvation there can be for any one, the growing ability to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil through individual right thinking—which would substitute for this a delusion of salvation by means of the untrustworthy suggestions of blind belief and thoughtless obedience.

Not all the perpetrators of the Spanish Inquisition were vicious, weak, senile, cruelty-loving men and women. Some were sincere, conscientious, devoted. The worst of them very likely were the best of them. Those, who are honestly beguiled by their material views of salvation, are more often than not splendid human beings, but by that very token they are the more dangerous to their fellows. There may be no fault in them except their entirely faulty state of mind, and because of that, there is neither safety nor helpfulness to be had from them.

It needs to be continually emphasized that the battle with ecclesiasticism is not a war against the men and

women who are ecclesiastics. They are above all others the worst victims of ecclesiasticism, and need most of all the enlightenment and encouragement which will bring them out of their ignorance and delusion. The fight is against the general human tendency to put material ways and means in the place of the initiative thinking which makes salvation a present fact in everyday experience.

The conflict at all times is with the ecclesiastical despotism, which, creeping in on the mesmeric suggestions of tradition and routine, in time assails every organized human effort and destroys as an appreciable influence the idea or ideal that was originally the sole reason for the existence of an organization. He alone is safe from the insinuations and subtleties of ecclesiasticism, who insists upon doing his own thinking at all times, under all circumstances, with all men and women.

If in doing this he finally attains that place of sympathetic understanding and sweet reasonableness where he can think for himself and still smile with all and listen to all with kindliness and patience—where he is neither aggressive himself nor vexed by the aggressiveness of others —he is well on the way towards the full stature of a man.

Historically, it was the privilege of Jesus the Christ to bring to an age, plunged to unusual depths in the darkness of ecclesiasticism and woefully subjected to its despotism and tyranny, a new hope, a clear light, a profound awakening. Today, it is also the privilege of those men and women, whose hearts and minds are kindled and illuminated by the same Christ concept of salvation through individual thought and demonstration, to bring to an ecclesiastically-ridden humanity hope, light, inspiration and a message of freedom.

Ecclesiasticism may be defined as the claim that what one does and the way he does it, and what one says and

the way he says it, what one believes and the way he believes it, are the prime essentials for his spiritual salvation. Materia medica paraphrases and parallels ecclesiasticism with its claims that what one does and the way he does it, and what one says and the way he says it, are supremely important for his material salvation.

The first part of the definition of materia medica applies particularly to the practice of healing by means of drugs, hygiene and surgery, the second part to certain phases of mental treatment, phases which are thoroughly materia medica in quality, though their pills and powders may be in the form of words and phrases and therefore not purchasable at the corner drugstore.

At the present time, with humanity believing as it does and placing its faith where it does, it would be nothing short of foolhardy to argue for the abandonment of either ecclesiasticism, so far as it is identified with the sincere minister and the church, or materia medica, so far as it is represented by the honest physician and the hospital. The human mass, in its present state of mind, could not get along without the churches, around which center so many of its social, even more than its religious, interests, or without the doctors' offices and institutions, which unquestionably hold much fear in check.

Both the church and the hospital have become so engrafted on modern humanity's concept of living that to cut them off at once would mean panic and disaster. While there is a fairly sizable element in the community that is not interested in churches and is mildly, even to an extent definitely, sceptical about medical beliefs and methods, yet actual education in metaphysical understanding, and genuine conviction regarding the power of right thinking to act quickly and potently where there is need of physical healing, have not advanced far enough to enable

even the clearest practitioners of mental and spiritual healing to cope with a public bewildered and frightened by a sudden and radical change in the established point of view.

The need right now is not the elimination of conditions on which humanity has been consistently trained to rely for spiritual and physical help—institutions and practices, which on that account are for the time being necessary and useful. What should be developed in humanity is a clearer and more intelligent understanding of the inherent nature of both ecclesiasticism and materia medica, an awakening to their unescapable evils, delusions and limitations, a resolution and purpose to resist rather than to accept their suggestions of reality and power, and to become less dependent upon them and less susceptible to the false law of consequences which has been so universally attached to all efforts to get along without their ministrations.

Neither ecclesiasticism nor materia medica is really needed to keep human beings well and happy, as a great many human beings in the aggregate have found out. But freedom from ecclesiasticism and materia medica must be won honestly and fairly through the mental and spiritual growth of the individual.

Facing the enormous web of modern materia medica, feeling a little the weight of materia medica's immense authority, seeing how seriously it takes itself and how seriously it is taken by those of high and low degree, from the learned professor in his study to the illiterate huckster in the alley; hearing its dicta, its prophecies, its saws and instances, passed sagaciously from mouth to mouth by every Tom, Dick and Harry to whom solemnity and reverence about anything else would be as foreign as icebergs

to the tropics; awed by the prestige, the equipment and the wealth of its institutions, the single purpose of which is to educate and investigate and theorize and proclaim along the established and orthodox materia medica lines; confronted with the laws of the nation, the state, the city, the town, all of them enacted and enforced under the profound conviction that the health of the people is thereby protected and maintained; associated in every walk of life with conscientious and devoted men and women, most of them working unselfishly for humanity's welfare, at times literally laying down their lives in humanity's service; and more than all else, touching the desperate, heartrending faith of humanity in this system of hoary antiquity and mighty promises, how can one help being amazed—and if it is new to him, dismayed—at the unstable foundation on which it all rests, at the credulity upon which it so nonchalantly and unconsciously plays, at the silly, freakish, abnormal ways and means it constantly employs to promote its astoundingly successful exploitation of mankind's fears and necessities?

The genesis of materia medica is pathetically evident to any one who takes the trouble to look it up. Materia medica has never found it worthwhile clouding or concealing its beginnings. On this point, it has a far cleaner record than ecclesiasticism, which draws the veil of sacred mystery over the actual progenitors of many of its ceremonials and symbolic rites, even of its dogmas and creedal statements.

In the Smithsonian Institute at Washington is an exhibit which graphically sets forth the history of medicine. One is taken back to the plainly superstitious beginnings—charms and amulets to be worn on the outside of the patient—through the long list of extraordinary concoctions from the animal, vegetable and mineral king-

doms for the inside of the patient, down to the no less extraordinary extracts and serums to be pumped into the patient.

This is supposed to show the progress of medicine from the humble beginnings of sorcery and magic to the magnificent attainments of science and sound knowledge. What it really shows is that the theory of healing, which was originally the outgrowth of superstition, bewitchery and delusion, has never freed itself from this basic incubus, and never can free itself while it holds to the belief that disease is a physical condition which can be healed by material means.

Naturally, the physician of today will at once agree that these practices of a by-gone age were barbarous and absurd, and that of themselves they not only had no healing value but were probably actually detrimental to the patient. He will even admit that the practice of a generation back is open to serious criticism, that of ten years ago questionable in many particulars, that of even five years ago not altogether sound in theory and technique; and he will plume himself that this is indicative of progress in the science of medicine.

Furthermore, straight in the face of such a history of unintentional, though according to his own admission undeniable, malpractice, he will stoutly and honestly maintain that modern, up-to-date medicine is a different thing altogether, that it is genuinely scientific, and that of all the long line of medical men, the modern, up-to-the-minute physician alone has a trustworthy and sane healing method.

He claims this within strict limits, to be sure—the allopath for all allopaths, the homeopath for all homeopaths, the eclectic for all eclectics, the osteopath for all osteopaths. But within the limits, each and all of them seem

to believe, and certainly those who go to them for help believe, that the claims they make for their own practice are valid—and this in the face of the monotonous repetition in the history of medicine of the same fact, that the orthodox medical theory and practice of one period is flouted and condemned as ignorant quackery by the medical practitioners of succeeding periods.

I know that I have stated the situation in regard to the unstability of medical theory and practice broadly and vividly, though I hope not unfairly in its general aspects. If one were to go into details, he would find numerous exceptions—physicians, who have made a virtue of being old-fashioned and of practising curious and unusual healing arts, oftentimes winning a large clientele by their peculiarities. Also there are numerous questions and doubts among doctors, who agree on the main points of practice, regarding the efficacy of certain methods.

Vaccination as a preventive of smallpox is a case in point. Against the insistence of the large body of physicians on the value of vaccination, and their endeavors to make it legally compulsory, there is a minority equally as insistent in their opposition to vaccination. They claim that it is a dangerous and unsanitary superstition, and argue that the bathtub rather than the virus is responsible for the lessening of the smallpox scourge. That smallpox has lessened is a fact to which the provaccinationist points as the most striking argument in his favor, though it has been difficult for him to bring irrefutable evidence to prove that vaccination has been the factor in the lessening.

There is no gainsaying that cleaner and more wholesome living, the disrepute attached to filthy and unsanitary habits, the incoming of a better sense of decency and a truer refinement, have gone a long way towards checking the ravages of some types of disease, and that as a

consequence several of the plagues that have persistently afflicted mankind in the past have largely disappeared under a better washed civilization. But these were really dirt plagues and not disease plagues. They were the normal outcome of an unclean, careless, ignorant and unwholesome way of living.

What has happened is, that the attitude towards dirty living has changed through the advent of a desire and fondness for cleanliness. It is true that materia medica physicians have had a share in bringing out this better mental and material condition, because they themselves have been both part of it and participants in it. But materia medica itself has not been a pronouncedly favorable influence in the advance. It has perpetuated and still continues practices which are essentially filthy and which would not be tolerated if they did not bear the magical label of medical authority.

The reputation of the physicians has been mightily enhanced as humanity has become cleaner and the dirt diseases less common in consequence, and the physicians have never been at all backward in claiming the glory. In this, they have doubtless been honest enough, even as humanity has been honest in awarding them the glory.

There is another type of diseases, which may be termed fear diseases, that has maintained a steadfast hold on mankind in spite of the efforts of materia medica to oust it. The average physician, because of his own fear and the propaganda of fear for which he is responsible in his well-meaning and misguided efforts to warn the public and prepare it for the worst that he can imagine, has been more to blame than any other single factor for the spread of this particular phase of disease.

The wide sweep of infantile paralysis and influenza in recent years illustrated this. The persistency of cancer

and consumption, diabetes and Bright's disease, against which materia medica wages a losing warfare, while at the same time it carries on a dramatic publicity campaign, shows that its method of educating the layman is at least open to question, as tending to develop rather than to overcome the fear with which humanity is already unduly afflicted.

Materia medica should begin to educate itself out of the blinding belief that any disease, diagnosed according to the unreliable testimony of physical symptoms, is necessarily incurable. In proportion to the progress that it makes in attaining greater confidence in the positiveness of health and harmony to banish the negativeness of sickness and inharmony, materia medica will find the list of its incurable diseases steadily diminishing, the fear diseases disappearing as the dirt diseases are doing.

Is there then no healing efficacy in drugs or in systems of hygiene? I am convinced that drugs in themselves have no inherent healing virtue, and that the administering of them, with the possible exception—and that as a temporary expedient only—of those used for the relief of pain, is rarely even temporarily advantageous. The concession in regard to pain-relieving drugs is by no means always a necessary one. I have had abundant proof in mental practice that pain can be destroyed by mental treatment as quickly as it can be relieved by a drug, with the added advantage that the mental treatment actually does away with the pain with only good effects for the patient, while the drug goes no further than making the patient insensible for the time being with reactionary after-effects of an unpleasant sort.

It is not at all unreasonable to conclude that drugs of themselves do nothing at all, either good or bad, in spite of seeming in some instances to bring healing and in other

instances to make trouble. Their apparent effect for good or evil is evidently due to their being endowed by specific and general human belief and agreement with suggestive therapeutic or anti-therapeutic properties. I do not mean that somebody has consciously declared that this drug has a certain property and that drug has another property. Nothing so elementary as that ever takes place in the realm of mental influences. Mental action of the determining sort goes on beneath the surface of personal consciousness. It is part of the framework of the entire life experience. It has its place deep in the paradoxical nature of that perplexing epitome of personal and general belief called a human being.

Nevertheless, in spite of the endowment of suggestion, the effect of the drug on the person who takes it is brought about, not by the drug or even by the suggestive element associated with the drug, but by the person's conscious or unconscious acceptance or rejection of the suggested effect. If he accepts the suggestion, his body acts accordingly. If he rejects the suggestion mentally, his body does not respond to the expected action of the drug. There can never be a drugging science. Drugs will always affect different persons differently, and affect the same person differently under changed mental conditions.

But, it is argued, if one should take poison, not knowing that it was poison, he would be made sick and perhaps die in consequence. It is naturally asked, if the effect of the drug is determined by the patient's belief in the power of the drug, how is it that a drug, about which he knows nothing, or a drug which may be given him when he is unconscious, will apparently relieve a pain or allay a fever? How is it that a baby who is not conscious of much of anything, or an animal which certainly knows nothing

of the supposed properties of drugs, will nevertheless respond in the expected way after being given drugs? How is it that animals of their own volition and selection will eat certain plants and herbs when they are not feeling just right, such as a dog eating grass when his stomach is upset?

In spite of what sometimes seems to be, I am by no means sure that the popular notion that animals resort to certain foods for healing purposes could be proved. What human beings call animal instinct, is the main mental equipment of the beast, and this leads him to a balanced ration whenever he can get it. I am fairly certain that this will account for all the instances of what appear to be animal drug taking.

The animal, however, does respond to the drugs that are given him by human beings. The baby also responds, and so does the one who has unknowingly taken poison. All these are instances where the response seems to be entirely automatic and unconscious. How can they be accounted for by the theory that the effect as a finality is not in the drug nor even in the general belief about the drug, but in the suggestion-susceptibility of the one to whom the drug is given?

As explained in a previous chapter, susceptibility to suggestion is not a matter determined to a major extent by what one is consciously conscious of. In everyone, child or grown-up, there is a vast realm of consciousness which one has as yet not learned is his consciousness. The conscious consciousness is an important factor in the education of one's self to the perception of a larger consciousness, but the conscious consciousness is but a small part of one's actual consciousness. Into that which is to us at present unconscious consciousness, suggestions are con-

tinually coming, about which we believe that we know nothing, and under the deception of the belief of not knowing are being accepted or rejected.

This unconscious consciousness, whether of a baby or an adult, knows all about drugs and poisons, and rejects or accepts the suggestions connected with them strictly in accord with the at-the-moment nature of its attained individuality or believed-in personality. It expresses in outward manifestation the logical results of a hidden but definite mental process. The animal is in the main unresisting in its response to dominant suggestion. This is the case with domesticated animals in regard to the conditions imposed upon them by human beings, with animals in their natural state to the relentless urge of their kind.

What has been said about drugging, will apply with equal force to sanitation, hygiene and surgery. Sanitation and hygiene to a marked extent are the logical outcome of the improved mental conditions of a progressive race experience. He whose thinking is on clean topics—and to be intelligent means to think cleanly, clearly and honestly on matters that uplift and ennoble—will live cleanly as the normal expression of his individuality and quality. That, as I understand it, is the fundamental purpose of both sanitation and hygiene, and the reason for the regulations that are promulgated in their name.

Surgery is less obviously a matter of mental effect and influence than either drugging or sanitation. With surgery, one sees a material thing definitely and actually done, a leg cut off or an appendix removed—even though he may later find out that the leg might better have been left on and the appendix permitted to stay where it was. The surgical state of mind is quite as open to blunders of excess as any other one-sided mental condition, if the tes-

timony of a few exceptionally frank physicians and surgeons is to be taken as true.

It is generally recognized that the patient's courage and optimism have a great deal to do with the success of any surgical operation. It might be conceivable that a sufficiently uplifted mental and spiritual state would obviate altogether the need of a surgical operation. Surgery will probably continue for the present as an important and helpful expediency for the bringing of temporary physical relief to human beings; but for it to achieve its greatest success and accomplish its utmost service, the importance of inspiring and uplifting thinking by both surgeon and patient should be more fully realized. When a clearer understanding of the principle of mental and spiritual reality, which is the basis of right thinking, is gained, the work of the surgeon will be less hazardous and more scientific than it is now. It will also be less necessary.

The honest and progressive materia medica physician is bound to find himself as time goes on less dependent on drugs and more dependent on mental and spiritual quality. A good bedside manner will not carry him far enough. He will be obliged to minister more directly to minds and souls diseased.

In order to do this, he will be compelled to heal himself somewhat of materialism, pessimism and scepticism, and to overcome in a measure sensuality and superstition. He must learn how to eliminate fear from the mind of the patient in order to destroy the effects of fear expressed in manifold diseases of the body. His protective therapeutics must go deeper than telling his patients what they shall eat, how often their bowels shall move, how many hours they shall sleep, where they shall live. He must penetrate with sympathetic understanding and broad perception into the mental life of his patients, their habits of

thought, and their intelligent or unintelligent points of view.

In the true physician, the functions of the ideal priest and the ideal doctor tend to become united, so that he is no less a loving and inspiring ministrator to the needs of the human soul than a successful healer of the diseases of the human body. A great mistake of ecclesiasticism and materia medica is that of looking upon the salvation of the soul and the healing of the body as different and distinct things to be accomplished in different and distinct ways.

The body is man's immediate sense of himself externalized. The true religionist and the true physician will always be able to prove by their works that he who frees the spirit of man from the delusions of a false materialistic sense of life and being will at the same time heal man's body of disease and suffering.

CHAPTER XV

Phases of Mental Materia Medica

Summary: The tendency of the materia medica physician to substitute some form of mental treatment for indiscriminate drugging —What is meant by mental materia medica—Inconsistencies and absurdities of materia medica laws—They cannot be God-ordained or Nature-ordained, but must be the thoughtless superstitious beliefs of human beings—The germ theory—A summary of the various forms that the practice of mental materia medica takes—The potency of suggestion and why it seems to heal—The same quality is found in the assertive suggestions for health as in the resistant suggestions of disease—A deadlock between them is likely to occur which can be broken only by bringing in the differing quality of intelligent thinking.

A number of materia medica physicians, less in bondage to convention and tradition than the average, possibly above the average in intelligence, initiative and courage, have come to the conclusion that drugs are not of major importance in the healing of physical disease, and consequently they have a tendency to rely less and less upon drugs in their practice. They have evidently discovered by observation and experiment that the patient's mental condition is an important factor in determining whether he does or does not get well. The chances for the recovery of a patient who is confident and courageous are greater than those of a patient who is fearful and depressed.

Such physicians may continue to give drugs, because their patients expect them to and want to be assured that something tangible is being done for them, although the "drugs" may be nothing but brown bread pills or a little sugar and water. In fact, not only have physicians, with

enough curiosity to do a little private research work, found that brown bread pills produce satisfactory results with some patients, but also that in certain instances a hypodermic injection of clear water is quite as effective in relieving pain as one of morphine.

Naturally these physicians become more and more disposed to practice healing by mental means and less given to administering drugs. They are responsible for various systems of suggestive therapeutics, which constitute a marked trend in modern medical practice. Not yet positively sanctioned by the medical school, these phases of mental materia medica are steadily gaining ground, and it is to be expected that they will in due course supersede the conventional drugging systems of the past and present.

While they assuredly are a step out of the primitive materialism and superstition of wholesale drugging, they are none the less materia medica systems. Whether the dose is administered as a mental suggestion, or as one of the awful messes of the old-fashioned allopath, or as the high attenuation of the homeopath, does not change the quality of the fundamental concept of the healing activity.

So long as one believes in modes, methods and systems, in fixed statements and formulas, in personal attitudes and relationships and contacts, in any humanly stabilized or "divinely authorized" material ways and means, he is a believer in materia medica and a practitioner of materia medica, though he may know no more about drugs and their supposed properties than a child does of infinitesimal calculus.

Nor does it make the slightest difference whether the one practising considers himself a mental practitioner and not a materia medica practitioner. To the extent that he operates from the basis of suggestion as distinguished from

the activity of intelligent right thinking, to the extent that he relies upon processes and formulated statements, on reading from books or upon what he has read in books, on personal authority and assertion—upon anything except his own inspiration and understanding and the spontaneous expression of them—he is practising mental materia medica. His faith is placed more in what he does and the way he does it, and in what he says and the way he says it, than in his individual and independent comprehension of mental and spiritual reality normally and naturally made evident in his thought, word and deed.

To most human beings, materia medica laws are fixed and determined conditions ordained by God or inherent in Nature. It is extraordinary that so few persons ever ask themselves why these curious materia medica conventions are what they seem to be. Why should one have a cold in the head because he gets his feet wet in a certain way? Why should one take cold after wetting his feet with his shoes and stockings on, and not take cold after wetting his feet with his shoes and stockings off when taking his morning bath? Why is it that one can go on a fishing trip, get soaked and stay soaked and never have the suspicion of a cold, and the next day not be able to dampen the bottom of his trousers walking from the street car to the office without developing a sneeze and a cough?

Is it possible that God made things that way, or that some kind of a Nature arranged affairs in such a contradictory fashion? Why should one person have a fever under certain circumstances and another person under the same circumstances have no fever? How is it, as sometimes happens, that a ship's company will go through the excitement and exposure of a shipwreck without so much as a cold in the nose, while later some of them may be brought down with pneumonia, the result, so they would

say, of sitting in a draught of air from an open window?

Around everything that one does cluster the consequences decreed by the laws of materia medica—what one eats, what one wears, where one lives, how one sleeps, whether one works or whether one plays, whether one goes to the doctor or does not go. To a multitude of human beings, the keeping of these laws is a sacred rite, a duty more imperative than that owed to any religion. By others, they are broken, ignored and even wilfully cast into the discard.

Those who keep the laws are not perceptibly better off, and often not so well off, as those who do not keep them; and it has never been made irrefutably evident that habitually going to the doctor is any pronouncedly greater promoter of continued good health and assured longevity than not going to the doctor. Some, who zealously heed all the health laws they know of and do not fail regularly to ring the doctor's office bell, get along very well, and naturally they attribute it to the faithful materia medica régime that they maintain. But others, who do none of these things, get along very well also, and they attribute their good health to keeping free from the doctors and their ways.

Human beings are thoroughly convinced that they must eat in order to live, and consequently around the subject of diet have gathered an immense number of materia medica laws. At various periods, the doctors have starved and stuffed their patients in order to heal them of what ailed them, and the patients, many of them, have fervently believed that either the starving or the stuffing has healed them. Patients have been fed raw meat to make them strong, only to be told by another variety of dietary experts that the amount of nourishment in a beefsteak is not

enough to keep a medium sized rat from going into a decline.

According to the rules and regulations of some physicians, an all meat diet is the straight road to the cemetery, although the Esquimaux eat practically nothing else and are delighted to get it in any stage of the raw and ripened. By the rules and regulations of others, an all vegetable diet is the king's signature to a death warrant, notwithstanding that peoples like the Chinese, Japanese and East Indians do the hardest kind of physical labor on a diet almost exclusively of rice.

There is no need further to multiply instances to show the contradictions, the inconsistencies, the absurdities, that characterize and are inseparable from this whole accumulation of materia medica law. How can one believe that there is anything of God or Nature, of truth or reality, connected with dicta that are so self-evidently haphazard, unprincipled, illogical and empirical?

Materia medica laws are human opinions and nothing else—human say-so's, human superstitions, human foolishness. Except for the suggestions of authority, of wisdom and of fear that have become associated with them through a long line of customs and traditions, they would have no more effect on humanity than does the barking of a dog on the moon. It is the thralldom of superstition that binds mankind to materia medica beliefs and claims, even as it is the thralldom of superstition that still binds mankind to some extent to the fulfillment of outgrown astrological beliefs and claims.

The power or the influence is not in the materia medica law or claim any more than it is in the astrological law or claim, but men and women, automatically responsive to a dominant suggestion until they learn better—until they learn to think for themselves and be themselves—uncon-

sciously, but nevertheless with self-determination, fulfill the demands of the law, which they have been trapped into accepting as the law of their being.

As the suggestion that because thirteen have sat at a table, one will die during the year, is nothing but a superstition and not a law at all, so the familiar materia medica claim that because one has sat in a draught, he will have a cold, is nothing but a superstition, and therefore not a law at all. A cold in the head does not necessarily follow sitting in a draught as many, many persons know from their own experience. Stepping on a rusty nail does not necessarily mean blood poisoning, as many have proved for themselves. Indeed, it never would mean blood poisoning, if humanity could become just a little more awake to the fact that the materia medica law, supposedly operative under such conditions, is plain, unadulterated superstition.

In every instance the seeming effect is produced, not by the operation of a law, but by the acceptance of a suggestion associated with the act of getting a rusty nail in the foot. The blood poisoning is really self-induced. Consequently, it not only can be prevented but it can also be eliminated by those who know the actual mental conditions which bring about the physical situation and intelligently refute their claims.

Without being conscious of it, humanity has trained itself to accept the fear-freighted suggestions of materia medica law; and to escape the consequences of this wrong education, it must consciously educate itself not to accept these suggestions.

The first step in this right direction is to learn so thoroughly as to be positively convinced, that when one comes in contact with materia medica claims, he is not dealing with laws which are God-ordained or Nature-

ordained, but with the unvarnished and silly superstitions of ignorant human beings, which have no more sense nor reason in them than have a lot of old wives' tales.

The same intelligent thinking and sound sense, that have freed the modern army commander from feeling that he must consult the condition of a goose's liver before starting a military campaign, will some time free humanity from the belief that it must regulate its public and private affairs in accord with the complicated system of chance consequences at present dignified as materia medica laws.

But, says the conscientious objector, germs are living organisms. They have been isolated, examined under the microscope, experimented with, named and discovered to have a life history. You cannot say that they are superstitious beliefs, that they do not cause sickness, and that men and women are not made immune to certain diseases by various kinds of treatment, which either do something to the germs or do something to the patient which makes the germs of no account as far as he is concerned.

Louis Pasteur is given the credit for discovering the part that germs are supposed to play in the ills of mankind, and for devising a means of combating their bad effects. The treatment is based on the theory, apparently demonstrated by the experiments of the material scientists, that the physical body has a natural, inherent aptitude or instinct for resisting disease-producing organisms.

It is claimed that this tendency can be educated or trained or taken advantage of by introducing the germs of the disease to be overcome into the body through inoculation in such small quantities that the natural resistance of the physical organism will destroy the disease-producing tendencies of the germs. By gradually increasing the ratio of the germ influence as the ability to resist

is developed or built up in the body, there will at length be reached a state of physical immunity to the full strength of the germ influence or power for causing disease.

Thus in his famous treatment for hydrophobia, which is so generally held to provide strong evidence of the soundness of the germ theory and the effectiveness of the inoculation antidote, the Pasteur process, so I understand from untechnical accounts, is to inoculate the patient at first with a weakened solution of the rabies, gradually augmenting the strength of the inoculation until the patient is resisting the full strength of the rabies poison.

One does not have to dispute the practical effectiveness of this treatment in order to perceive that some sort of an educational process is going on, and therefore that it is not far-fetched to conclude that what is being educated is not the physical body itself but the mentality which controls the physical body. What is being developed is not basically a physical resistance to disease, but a changed mental condition of suggestion-susceptibility. It is both mentally primitive and materially undemonstrable to advance the claim that the physical body in some mysterious way is putting itself through a process of chemical or mechanical metabolism and unintelligently and automatically fortifying itself against its germ enemies.

It seems reasonably self-evident that unless some kind of mind is affected by the educational or training system practised by means of inoculation, the results which are obtained would not be possible. One would not appear to be without sound sense on his side when he concludes that the real appeal of the inoculation process is to the mind of the patient, and the effects brought about depend upon the successful mental education of the patient and not upon developing an automatic physical resistance.

If this is true, it certainly is possible to bring about this education through a direct mental appeal as well as through the roundabout, misunderstood and acknowledgedly more or less dangerous method of putting the germs of disease in his body. It is not going too far to aver that all that is accomplished by vaccination and inoculation could be brought about by mental education, training and treatment, provided anywhere near the devotion and confidence that are lavished on the material processes were used to strengthen and maintain the mental development and understanding necessary to overcome the fears of contagion and infection.

It is common knowledge that a comparatively few years ago there was no germ theory, and that then the practice of materia medica was carried on without taking any more account of germs than the native South Sea Islander, if there are any left, takes of the latest Parisian fashions. What was considered of the greatest importance by those doctors of a germless generation—such things as protecting a patient with a fever from the night air by keeping the windows of the sick room closed, also the pleasant custom of giving him as little water as possible—is now regarded as positively detrimental to the one who is sick. Exactly the opposite course is pursued by the physicians of a cleaner and more sanitary generation.

Wholesomeness and cleanliness are always commendable, for they are the normal externalization of wholesome and clean mindedness. The pursuit of the germ, however, is the materia medica fashion of the day, and the modern materia medica practitioner, as was the case with the ancient materia medica practitioner with the fashion of his time, has his mind filled with the germs of the contemporaneous fashion and can imagine nothing but a continuance of germs throughout a fanciful eternity

of the materia medica practice, which is the only sane and possible healing method to him.

Unless an inconceivably radical change has taken place in the nature of materia medica—and one sees no evidence of it—it is safe prophecy that the germ theory of disease, and the treatment that has come into vogue with the theory, will within another generation be almost as obsolete as is now the historical practice of cupping and bleeding. Of course, such a statement is not proof of anything. It only infers from the fact that as the sun always has risen in the east in the morning, it will rise in the east as usual tomorrow morning.

It is likely that the exact moment at which the average medical student knows the most about materia medica is when he leaves the medical school, filled to the brim with medical theories and claims, with the theoretical properties of drugs and the positiveness of hygienic systems—all the things which, according to the materia medica ideal, are supposed to work automatically with all patients under all conditions, utterly regardless of such minor propositions as states of mind. To the intelligent and conscientious young doctor, the first years of his active professional work must be a time of bitter discouragement and disappointment, as he finds by practical experience that what he has been taught about drugs is not reliable, that patients do not respond and symptoms do not change as he has been led to believe that they would.

If he is at all given to independent thinking, which unfortunately not many medical practitioners are—a trait they have in common with the rest of humanity—he will begin to take into account the personal elements that enter so largely into the successes and failures of his efforts to help his patients. He will deal more and more with states of mind as he learns how they produce conditions of the

body. In this way he will start, perhaps without realizing what he is doing, to give mental treatment of a sort, and the empirical mental methods, forced on him by the exigencies of everyday practice, will take the place of the pseudo-science and the assumed knowledge of healing principles taught in the medical schools.

Whether the result of this empiricism in the field of mental practice is called suggestive therapeutics, auto-suggestion, psycho-analysis or psychology, the point of real and important interest is not the name but the concept in the thought of the one who is utilizing the mental power for the benefit of another.

Does he conceive that he personally is manipulating the mental wires, that through some sort of mental force or effort, some push and drive, some power of forceful utterance or feeling, through his adroitness in probing or persistency in questioning or keenness in surmising, he gains entrance into the mentality of the patient, makes the patient see things differently, argues the patient out of one state of mind into another—in short, by his personally directed and personally applied human mind power, he produces an effect on the human mind of his patient?

Does he believe in the final efficacy of a system of mental practice, composed of formulas and of the repetition of words and phrases thoughtlessly or continuously as a child might recite the multiplication table? Does he believe in hypnosis, in extracting memories from the minds of patients when they are unconscious of what is going on, in displacing unpleasant suggestions with pleasant suggestions without the patient being aware of it? Is he operating with the human mind on the human mind—the mind of automatism and suggestion-susceptibility as distinguished from the mind of conscious intelligent thought

activity—expecting through the forcible implanting of one kind of beliefs, opinions and statements to crowd out the inhibitions, misconceptions and delusions that are making the patient ill?

If his point of view and mental attitude correspond to those thus briefly and roughly outlined, if in his concept he holds that the evil and inharmonious conditions which he is trying to overcome are the effect of law and therefore have a reasonable cause for being, if his own personality and mentality are regarded as the essential and prime factors in getting the results that he is after—if any system or method by word or action is looked upon as of final importance, if there is not complete freedom of thought and action under the guidance of the individual intelligence, as distinguished from the intellectual belief, of both practitioner and patient—then, regardless of the name it goes under, the healing practice still partakes of the superstitious glamor of materia medica.

Although the material drug and the hygienic devotion to the care of the body may not be apparent, nevertheless the faith and the belief are still in the materialistic and the external. The practice may be of a kind mental, but it is a mental materia medica, a step in advance of the crude witchcraft of the drug, but still a reliance upon the theurgical charm of the magically endowed word, the properly chanted formula, the especially blessed ceremonial, the peculiarly gifted personality.

That such mental proceedings do change the mental and physical states of many patients is quite true, and that in consequence they are given the credit for healing, is also true. Suggestion seems to be tremendously potent in all lines of human experience. It is, indeed, the very stuff out of which human experience is made. Yet suggestion does not take humanity out of itself and out of its self-

imposed limitations. It changes aspects. It changes appearances. It shuffles the cards, and it deals good hands and bad hands. But it is always the same pack of cards, the same game of juggling beliefs, the same rules of chance, superstition, inconsequential and unreasonable consequences, the same confusion and bewilderment, the same show over and over again, without logical cause or understandable principle.

With that sort of mental practice, one is as much thrust under the domination of fate and chance as he is by the more familiar phases of ecclesiasticism and materia medica. He seems to have made progress, and so he has towards the end of the material delusion, for experience will convince him that much which seems to be progress is a chimera and a delusion. Unless the practice of mental healing is something truer and broader, of deeper significance and sounder intelligence, unless it touches law or principle outside the suggestive apparatus of the human mind, there is really no fuller hope to be found in it, and no more lasting accomplishment to be expected from it, than from any other materialistic theory or practice.

When a locomotive hits a snowbank, the power of assertion of the locomotive and the power of resistance of the snowbank are of the same quality though exerted in opposite directions. When the assertive power of the locomotive is equalled by the resisting power of the snowbank, there is a deadlock, which can be broken only by augmenting in some way the power of the locomotive or decreasing the resistance of the snowbank.

This is accomplished by bringing in an outside force—by increasing the steam pressure, by using another locomotive, by some intelligent action that makes the power available more efficiently utilized, or by shovelling away

the snow, letting the sun melt it, any other method that will cut down the resistance of the snowbank.

However the desired end is brought about, a new factor must come in to break the deadlock, and this new factor is always a form of external activity or accomplishment, which is the outward effect of a different mental slant on the original problem of driving the locomotive through the snowbank. Even in the case of waiting for the sun to melt the snow, if this is done with a purpose, a fresh mental concept has to become active in order to stop the useless procedure of applying an assertive force equal to the resistant force.

The most effective and satisfactory mental activity under such circumstances is one into which enters conscious intelligence, turning from old and ineffective beliefs to new and efficient unfoldings of the right idea.

In all systems of healing based on suggestion—whether the suggestion is made by drugs, hygiene, surgery, through hypnosis or auto-suggestion, by means of combinations of words or any line of associated concepts—the assertive force of one set of suggestions is exerted against the resistant force of another set of suggestions.

Like the locomotive and the snowbank, the quality of the force is the same on both sides, and the outcome is determined by the amount of brute strength, mental or physical, that is put forth. If the greater vigor and vitality and drive are on the side of the assertive suggestions for health and harmony, they will prevail for the time being. If the greater resistance is in the inertia of sickness, discouragement and fear, these will prevail.

It is true that the most definite constructive force is always with what makes for health and freedom, but for all that, the main battle is between forces of the same quality working in opposite directions, and there is the

same likelihood of a deadlock somewhere along the line as there is in the struggle between the locomotive and the snowbank.

When this deadlock occurs in the controversies between suggestions, a new mental element of a different quality must become active if anything in the way of healing is to be accomplished. This quality is intelligent thinking, the authority and dominance of which are not in personal opinion or belief, but in understanding, which has been gained through demonstration, of the laws and facts of spiritual reality.

Because of the limitations of its own nature and quality, suggestion can go no further than to toss about and re-arrange the temporary affairs and feelings of personal human beings. The positive progressive accomplishments of true healing must be secured and maintained through the intelligent thinking and spiritual perception that bring the man of individuality and dominion into being and expression.

CHAPTER XVI

Metaphysical Healing and Its Purposes

Summary: Healing is more than a readjustment of physical symptoms and functions—Physical conditions are the effects of states of mind—The real purpose of metaphysical treatment is to revise the mental and spiritual outlook on life—The preventive power of sound metaphysical understanding is as valuable as the remedial power—It is important to approach every problem as a new proposition—The human propensity to label and classify should not be indulged—Different standpoints from which the healing problem may be approached—If mental manipulation and suggestion are used, they should be used without self-deception—The danger of judging according to artificial standards.

From the standpoint of the metaphysician, healing is more than a readjustment of physical symptoms and functions, so that a condition of the human body, generally agreed upon as healthy and normal, will be presented instead of a condition regarded as unhealthy and abnormal. Physical conditions, whether harmonious or inharmonious, are the outward manifestations of states of mind. This is true of all physical conditions, though the common belief of human beings is that some physical manifestations are the outcome of mental states while others are wholly the effect of material causes.

There is nothing scientific about such distinctions. They are superficial and demonstrably unsound. Diseases of an organic nature, to be traced according to common opinion to material causes, have been repeatedly healed by mental treatment. They are dealt with quite as successfully by mental healers as are diseases of the functional type, which are generally held to be more or less mental in their origin. Fear, worry, discouragement,

morbid imagination, any other mental abnormalities, if persisted in, are as likely to find an outlet on the body in some phase of so-called organic disease as they are in the form of a functional disorder.

Even the effects of accidents, where the sense testimony indicates overwhelmingly a specific material cause, are determined, not so much by the outward circumstances, as by individual rejection or personal acceptance of suggestions of fear and injury, which the accident brings before the mentality. If this is not so, how can the different experiences of different persons under the same conditions be explained? Shall one forever be satisfied to beg the question and always join the majority in calling it chance?

One's health and one's lack of health are alike determined, not by happen-so, by inheritance, by personal physical peculiarities, by modes of human living, by material surroundings—by none of these, but by habits of thought and by the mental quality consciously or unconsciously developed and established. The particular physical conditions known as sickness are presented by the body, or seem to be present in the body, because debilitating suggestions have been wittingly or unwittingly allowed to dominate the personal consciousness. The diseased bodily conditions are outward expressions of unwholesome mental states.

A well trained and developed physique is a fine thing for any human being to have, but if it is not controlled by a well trained and developed mentality, which understands somewhat the laws of intelligent living and how to use them to advantage, the most glorious physique is no sure guarantee of continued health and strength.

When one is dealing with a sick person, it is important to recognize that the readjustment called healing must be-

gin in the mind and spirit of the sufferer, if any radical and basic changes in the bodily conditions are to be brought about. Healing, therefore, is not a rearranging of symptoms, replacing unfavorable ones with favorable ones. It is not replacing ill health with good health, pleasing and satisfactory as this is as far as it goes. It is bringing to the patient an increased immunity to disease by revising his mental and spiritual outlook on life.

This mental and spiritual change is not always at once perceptible in the personal consciousness of the patient, especially when he is in an extreme state of mental or physical collapse. Then the immediately apparent aspects of the case are specific gains physically, or in instances where the difficulty is definitely mental, in a clearer and sounder functioning of the patient's mind. Nevertheless, under the influence of the mental treatment which is opposing all material laws and claims as unreal or inherently superficial and therefore as unwarranted impositions and infringements on the rights of man, there should be sooner or later indications of a fundamental change in the patient's mental viewpoint and an awakening of his spiritual nature.

To heal means to overcome the tendency to be ill physically or otherwise as well as to relieve the physical ills which are already in evidence. The preventive power of a sound metaphysical understanding is at least as important as the remedial power of a demonstrable comprehension of mental and spiritual reality. Therefore, the mental healer should expect his work to bring forth both satisfactory physical results and also the revision of the mental concept and the clarifying of the spiritual sense, through which come clearer perceptions of spiritual reality.

There should be the influx of a broader and more conscious identification and valuation of spiritual entities. This will enable the patient to get a convincing view of himself as the representation and the exponent of purposeful living. One who is thoroughly healed will naturally and spontaneously prove that he is thoroughly healed by his increased ability to express his true individuality, his actual nature and quality, in a finer, fuller and more lovely life experience.

Regardless of what form it may take, the basic purpose of metaphysical treatment is to enlarge the vision of Truth or God, to destroy fear, to lessen somewhat the sense of limitation which belief in the finality of material circumstances and laws always inculcates, and to penetrate a little the mesmerism that prevents the one who is being treated—it may be one's self or it may be another—from knowing what manner of man he is and from being the man he really is. Unless one has revealed to him a new vision of himself—a vision worth attaining and possible of attainment—the ultimate purpose of the treatment has not been attained. This vision and inspiration are the new birth referred to by Jesus.

The mesmeric claims of fear and limitation may be manifested in a number of ways—as a sick body or as a sick mind or as both, as a well body and a mind so conventionalized and deeply set along standardized lines that it is the acme of human righteousness and virtue, occasionally as an ill body and a mind so sane, reasonable and enlightened that there is apparently no coordination between the physical bondage and the mental freedom.

Appearances, however, can never be taken as final by the metaphysician, and all classifications must be held by him as perfunctory and always open to revision or abandonment. A well mind in an ill body is as certain an in-

dication of an unintelligent mental state of some sort as is a sick mind in a sick body. An important element in any success that the mental practitioner may have is to be found in his ability to approach every problem that comes to him as a new proposition out of the moment just born.

Refusing to indulge the human propensity to classify and label, he will earnestly ask himself: How can I best help this person to think for himself, to discover himself in the light of his richer possibilities, and to live a life that tends to the fuller realization of them? Human beings should not be regarded by any one as experimental stations, and their individuality should not be sacrificed to any one's fondness for generalizations, for classifications, for leadership, for the easy comfortableness of routine. Humanitarian arguments that would justify such methods are always specious and apart from the point. Every man and woman is entitled to the dignity of being heard for himself, judged by himself, dealt with according to his individual need, and left free to think for himself and act according to his uninfluenced conclusions.

The problem of healing may be approached from two different standpoints. Some regard a self-conscious and personally directed mental effort as necessary to produce the results that they are after. They have various methods by which they seek to get in touch with the patient's mentality and manipulate it in the ways and along the lines that they consider essential in order to bring the mental elements into a satisfactory arrangement. The schemes employed to attract the patient's attention may range from the crudeness of physical stroking, patting and poking to the more subtle ones of audibly or silently calling the patient by name and arguing at him or with him in the form of a mental pleading, not unlike that of a lawyer presenting a case in court.

Whatever the detail may be, the concept coloring such a treatment is that of the healer's personally directed thought striving to get in touch with and obtain an influence over the personal consciousness of the patient in order to impress upon the patient's mentality the particular points of view which the practitioner believes to be advantageous. All this may be done with the best of motives, and on that account be helpful and stimulating to the patient. For all that, it is obvious that the method itself is mesmeric. It is equally plain that no method of mental healing, which presupposes the operation of personally directed thought from one mentality to another mentality, can successfully defend itself against the charge of being mesmeric and suggestive in its nature.

The second standpoint from which the problem of healing may be approached is one radically different from that just outlined. It conceives of healing as the lawful and even inevitable result of spiritual perception and realization acting on the human consciousness as light on darkness, showing forth clearly and brightly the God-like individuality of man as a universal and everpresent reality. It conceives of the practitioner and patient as always two independent entities, although acting together and functioning coordinately to produce the healing result that they both desire and are expecting.

With this concept of healing, the practitioner does not feel that he must reach over into the patient's mentality and try to make it work as it should, but he finds himself well and effectively employed in making clear in his own mind the falsity of the mesmeric suggestions and delusions on account of which the patient is suffering. He might liken himself to the lighthouse keeper, whose business it is to see that the light is always bright and burning, so that the sailor may be guided aright. The patient

has the cooperative activity of being mentally and spiritually receptive, of overcoming prejudice and depression, of being ready to respond to any impulse for good that he may feel. He is in the position of the mariner, who must make proper use of the beacon light in order to steer his vessel safely into port.

In actual practice, most mental healers—especially when they are taking their first steps in the healing work, and quite regardless of how anxious they may be to keep the personal element entirely out—habitually combine the two views of healing, and as a result their treatments are a compromise between mental suggestion and spiritual realization. Theoretically they may not believe in mental manipulation, and because they do not believe in it, they may honestly be convinced that they are not practising it. Yet the stress laid upon them by the human mind to "do something" is so strong that they yield to it without realizing or being willing to recognize that they have yielded.

The honest mental practitioner, who knows his own thought processes, will frankly acknowledge, and should frankly acknowledge, that it is a long, long journey—and over a road that has constantly to be re-travelled—to the place where he does not instinctively reach out for the formula to be repeated over and over again, where he is not continually tricked into applying personal mental force to himself or another in order that conviction may be arrived at on the point where conviction seems necessary. To our human nature, it appears much easier, much more satisfactory and assuring, to bear heavily on the side of mental manipulation than to rely with calm, conscious peace and understanding on the normal effect of spiritual illumination to shed the convincing light of truth on the darkened mentality of the patient.

As a matter of fact, there is nothing especially shocking about mental manipulation—at least, not more shocking than countless other phases of wholly respectable human living. The point is that if there is to be mental manipulation, and at present it is well-nigh impossible to avoid it, it should be carried on intelligently and above board. The danger from mental manipulation comes from those and to those who are deceived about it—who either believe that they are not mentally manipulating when they are, or who believe that they are not being mentally manipulated when that is what is happening to them.

While they are the victims of such deceptions, they are continually undermining their powers of discrimination and thus rendering themselves incapable of sound judgment on any aspect of the human problem. They are far more of a menace to the general welfare than are those who consciously and intentionally, without knowing any better or desiring anything better, are practising mental manipulation. These are at least honest about what they are doing. Their motives and their perceptions may not be of the highest, but at any rate they are out in the open for all mankind to look at.

At present, it is safe to affirm that suggestion and mental manipulation are at times the temporary expedients of all mental practitioners. Those who are progressive and alive to the truth do not deceive themselves on this point, nor, even in the face of the compromise, do they lower their ideal or abandon their standard of mental practice. They continue to work steadfastly, intelligently and understandingly to attain the position where all healing shall spontaneously result from the mental and spiritual quality which is naturally thought and lived.

It must be thoroughly recognized that the standpoint from which a mental practitioner is working cannot be

determined nor finally judged by the label he chooses to wear or even by the methods which he seems to employ. These do, indeed, roughly separate the sheep from the goats, but they do not really settle or decide a thing. The true indication is not to be found in what one does or says, but in the mental attitude which he has, the spiritual quality which he is expressing, the reasons of heart and soul that cause him to do what he does and say what he says.

All schools of metaphysical healing have a way of drawing circles about themselves and their little band of adherents, and of denouncing all who are outside the circle as fundamentally wrong in theory and practice. It is self-evident, however, if there is really a law of mental and spiritual healing—and I suppose all schools believe that there is or they would not get so much satisfaction out of their petty sense of proprietorship—that it must be a universal law, and therefore demonstrable by any one, regardless of the particular color of his human mind and nature, who has sufficient of the right understanding to fulfill the requirements of the law.

Anybody can have an electric light who learns enough about the laws of electricity to get one. He may be white, black, red or yellow—it makes not a particle of difference. I conclude that the law of healing is like that. If the requirements are met, the healing is there. One may believe himself to be anything that it pleases him to be—Christian Scientist, mental scientist, psycho-analyst, spiritualist. It makes no difference who one is or what one calls himself. If the requirements of the law of mental and spiritual healing are met, the healing is made manifest.

The Christian Scientist believes—and rightly, so it seems to me—that the Principle of Truth, Life and Love,

which he calls God, does the healing, and that this healing is made manifest to human beings whenever and wherever sufficient spiritual understanding is gained by some individual to illumine the human consciousness with the radiant realization of the right to healthy, harmonious living and uphold it with the stable conviction of dominion over material sense testimony.

Theoretically the Christian Scientist does not believe in mental manipulations, and on that account may be a little apt to regard everybody except himself as given to mental manipulations and as having no conception of healing other than by manipulations. Manifestly this conclusion is unfair and lacking in discriminating self-knowledge. While there are many, many Christian Science practitioners who are sincere, intelligent and effective in their healing work, there is not one, I am sure, who does not at times manipulate thought and fall back on suggestion.

Even as there will be found an abundance of mental manipulation and suggestive therapeutics in the Christian Science school of metaphysics, which theoretically and honestly does not believe in either, so there will be found in other schools of metaphysical healing a striving after pure spiritual realization, success at times in attaining it and in bringing about healing which is the direct result of this pure spiritual realization.

How foolish it is to draw sectarian lines about the great fact of man's spiritual equality and human brotherhood, and then to pass judgments as if this sectarianism determined something! Mental and spiritual attainment is not the exclusive privilege of any school. Illumined by intelligence and spiritual power, the healing work of all schools is clear evidence of the presence and natural operation of universal spiritual law.

Mental quality, whether good or bad, does not confine itself within artificial barriers and does not line itself up with artificial standards. Beautiful theories and ideals are necessary for human progress, but they must be given the breadth of universal human consciousness for their realization and development. In the experience of the personal human being, the success or failure to express the true and the genuine is determined, not by an adherence to form, phrase and method, but by his freedom and confidence in giving truthful and unrestricted expression to his own mental and spiritual quality and by his unprejudiced recognition of the right of others to do the same.

To accomplish this, the deceptions and illusions of appearances must be resolutely set aside, and the nature and character of the inner being and feeling must be sympathetically and fairly cognized. It is the egotism, fear and ignorance of narrow-minded and unthinking human beings, which raise the barriers of artificial mental and material restrictions, and would whitewash everybody inside the walls and blacken everybody outside.

Good men and women, intelligent men and women, broad-minded men and women, spiritually intuitive and receptive men and women, are to be found in all schools, and these, regardless of their labels and their superficial methods, are bound in actual practice to touch the same universal law of mental and spiritual healing that is the common possession and blessing of all mankind.

Again, there are politically minded, materially minded, fanatically minded, men and women in all schools. They are bound to quarrel over the husks of the letter, the form and the name, and perceive little of substance or worth apart from them.

Be it the devotee of auto-suggestion or any other phase

of mental therapeutics, of Christian Science or any other school of spiritual realization—all to whom orthodoxy, the sense of conformity, is primarily important, swing about the common center of the written or verbal rule, the authorized method, the scholastically qualified personal opinion, and are disconcerted and disturbed by anybody or anything that tends to interrupt the routine or turn from the beaten track.

All who are primarily interested in the unfolding truth —even though it takes them into ways novel and strange to their associates—are upholding the same ideal, are searching for the same great law of Love and Truth, are cherishing the same magnificent hope, and in spirit are giving the same help to suffering humanity.

CHAPTER XVII

Healing Methods and the Law of Healing

Summary: The metaphysician should have an ideal of mental practice—This ideal is not found in manipulations of the human mind nor in systems of suggestion—What is meant by the statement that God does the healing—The supreme accomplishment is getting men and women to think for themselves—The mental healer is an educator—There is no established technique by which mental healing can be made to operate—There is nothing which one must accept or believe to be true in order to be healed—Some characteristics of the universal law of mental and spiritual healing—The relation of instruction and training to the law and to the individual—The use of quotations from the Bible and other statements—Various forms of mental treatment criticized—All methods may be at times helpful, but no methods have of themselves healing power.

It is essential that the metaphysician should have an ideal of mental practice, and that this ideal should have a solid foundation of results and accomplishments on which to stand.

I am not content to establish my ideal on personally directed manipulations of the human mind nor on any system of suggestions that goes no deeper for its authority than the temporary concepts of mankind, however noble and far-reaching they may seem to be.

Manipulations of the human mind and suggestive therapeutics often, it is true, bring startling and quick results, but even when the results are permanent, as human conditions go, one does not find in connection with them the mental changes and revisions of life-outlook, which show a point finally won in the great task of making living a matter of intelligent thinking instead of an automatic or standardized response to suggestion.

It is commonly declared by those who are reaching beyond mental manipulation into the field of spiritual realization that God does the healing, and so He does, if by the statement it is meant that the healing is the effect of law or principle made specifically operative through the intelligent right thinking of some individual man or woman. If by the statement that God is the healer is meant a supernatural intervention in human affairs by an all-powerful God-Person without the participation of the individual agent of impersonal Truth and Love called man, then there is not the slightest evidence to show that such a God is the healer of anything.

Intelligent utilization of the mental and spiritual possibilities always at hand, is necessary in order to heal, or, in fact, to do anything progressive and substantial in the way of human living. Supreme above everything else must be placed the task of getting people to think for themselves. This is the important work of the mental healer. I am convinced that the universal law of healing can be comprehended and utilized only by those who have learned and are learning to think for themselves regarding all phases of the human problem. I am certain that bodily freedom, mental freedom and spiritual freedom are for the independent, intelligent thinkers, and for them only. Liberty and mass mesmerism do not travel together.

Consequently, I am not content to look upon the mental healer as a sublimated doctor or an unsanctioned priest. The mental healer finds his rightful place among the educators, the inspired teachers, with those who by word, precept and example instruct, guide and inspire mankind, encouraging it to leave behind childish concepts and beliefs and explore the rich culture of the God-like and eternally real.

It is a pity that the churches, even those that start with

an ideal of a complete salvation for soul and body, mind and spirit, should so readily slip into the ecclesiastical and scholastic, when they should be the upholders of the scientific and scholarly. The churches should be places where mankind could learn how to live lives of mental and spiritual independence. Mostly they have given themselves over to stultifying the mind and spirit of man. They should provide men and women with the opportunities and the inspiration to think for themselves, wisely, sanely, broadly, on every aspect of human living. Instead they tend to clog the mentalities of men and women with mystery, sentimentality, piety and fear, and to turn human beings into solemn marionettes, carrying on a make-believe for the salvation of their souls.

There are helpful measures, temporary ways, which are useful in bringing one's self to an open, free, normal state of mind—to the mental and spiritual attitude or being where revelation and light, clear thinking and wise expression, are a definite, self-conscious experience. But there is no process or method of a fixed and established kind—there is no material technique—by which mental and spiritual healing can with consistency be made to operate. The law of metaphysical healing is not a rule to be followed, but a mental and spiritual quality which must be lived.

What seems to be a most difficult fact for the average human being to grasp is the simple, logical and provable one that it is not what one does or says, either medically or mentally, which heals mankind in body or mind. Healing is the evidence of the triumphant spirit of man. It is the victory of the soul militant, the effect and result of inspirational conviction which has been attained through the sacrifice of limiting personal desires and beliefs, through purposeful intelligent thinking, through progres-

sively developing the understanding and compassion. To the one who is the active agent in the healing—the healer or practitioner as he is commonly called—this inspiration and conviction are identified as a sense of uplifted and sympathetic illumination and feeling within his own perceptive and conscious being.

The individualized mental and spiritual quality which produces healing is an actually possessed and consistently kept perception or realization. This condition is not superficially nor haphazardly produced or induced. What one spontaneously, naturally and without abnormal self-consciousness is, he in turn spontaneously and naturally manifests in thought, word and deed. It is true that sometimes what is said and done, when it is not the manifestation of the spirit which one actually feels and really is, may seem to be an effective healing agency, but it is effective on the plane of suggestion, as drugs and manipulations, mental or physical, are effective.

With years and years of ecclesiastical and medical training behind them—with ecclesiastical and medical training representing the characteristic modes of the human mind itself—human beings do not at once realize that there is nothing in the nature of the dogmatic or ceremonial which they must believe or accept in order to be purged of their sins or healed of their diseases.

When one thinks about it, how is it possible for an all-wise, all-knowing, all-loving Heavenly Father—and even the formulated theological and ecclesiastical sense of God claims He is all that—so to stultify His wisdom, intelligence and love as to demand from men and women that which they can give only by paying the price in ignorance and self-deception? What satisfaction could an all-wise, all-knowing Heavenly Father get from the blind acceptance by men and women of any dogma or their uncon-

cerned acquiescence to any ceremonial? How can things so unverifiable and so unstable as are all dogmas and ceremonials, so unsatisfying to the genuine spirit of man however strongly they may play upon the emotions, so temporary in meaning, so sure to change as time goes on, be considered guarantees for anyone's eternal welfare?

Many of the beliefs, around which has gathered the atmosphere of sanctity and fundamentality, are self-evidently unprovable and unexplainable—such as the dogma of the Trinity, the claims regarding the Immaculate Conception and Virgin Birth of Jesus, and those about his resurrection and ascension. One may formally accept them as true, and it is entirely his privilege to do so, but he can never know that they are true. On that account, they cannot be essential to his salvation. He may believe heart and soul in them, and there is no reason why he should not if to do so pleases him, but he can never be actually positive that as facts, human or otherwise, they are as represented.

For this reason, it is impossible for them to have a place in any demonstrable plan of complete salvation. One may shift his point of view and look upon the belief and the ceremony as symbolic of spiritual realities, and declare that from that standpoint they are necessary to salvation. But again the position is not well taken. Symbols mean nothing of themselves. They never are the reality, nor are they inseparably connected with the reality. They mean what men and women say that they mean. Consequently, their meaning is a matter of personal determination, never a matter of fact or reality.

No statement, no rule, no method, is true of itself. Every one of them must be interpreted. The interpretation is always in accord with the mental and spiritual quality of the interpreter. The truth or the falsity, there-

fore, is not in the statements or the rules, but in the mental attitude or quality which gives the meaning to the statements, rules or methods.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee," is a fine statement of Truth, but it is impractical, misleading and meaningless until given an interpretation that is of demonstrable value.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before Me," is a grand rule, but until it is interpreted with some understanding of its spiritual import, it does not keep mankind from the adoration and idolization of a materialistic and personal concept of Deity.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy strength and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself," is a magnificent ideal of human living, but unless there is a broad understanding of what it means to love, and a truer and more impersonal sense of love than most human beings conceive of, general living conditions will not be greatly benefited by even the most zealous devotion to this supposedly divine injunction.

A law is usually regarded as a rule of conduct or, in connection with philosophy and science, the statement of an order or relation looked upon as invariable under certain conditions. Yet law in its root meaning is that which is laid, set or fixed. Therefore it is not so far-fetched as some might consider to term that law which is present with reasonable consistency in all the aspects of sound mental and spiritual healing, even though that which one calls law is a quality or attitude rather than a rule or relationship.

The law of mental and spiritual healing is not a mathematical or mechanistic proposition. It is not a specifically describable activity of the mind or the body.

It is not a rule or regulation to be comprehensibly stated in the cold terms of the human intellect. It is not something that can be put into so many words, be definitely and fully illustrated by example or parable, and symbolized in a material way with finality or accuracy.

When an experienced chauffeur finds himself facing an emergency, as when another car unexpectedly darts out from a side street, he does not consciously think what to do and consciously make himself do it. He acts, shutting off the power and putting on the brakes. After it is over, he congratulates himself that he could not have done better if he had stopped to think.

As a matter of fact, he probably would not have done so well, for his spontaneous action was the normal result of his intelligent and true selfhood, trained especially in the driving of motor cars, expressing itself untrammeled by the fears and questions of personal consciousness.

The chauffeur had been through a period of instruction and education to bring him to the point where his intelligence, apparently automatically, expressed itself in a right activity when there was need for it to do so. As human expedients under present conditions of belief, instruction and training were necessary. They made it possible for him to drive the car. Nevertheless they were not what drove the car, and certainly they were not what spontaneously acted in the emergency.

That which drove the car, which acted as it should act when the demand for action came, was the chauffeur himself, his trained and developed state of mind, his established attitude towards chauffeuring, his understanding, his efficiency, his quality of mind and spirit, his individuality. Without this "isness" of himself, which was truly the law of his being—his genuine nature and quality as manifested in connection with his work as a chauffeur—all

his instruction and all his training and all his practice would not have amounted to a thing when the demand came for quick dealing with an emergency.

The law of mental and spiritual healing is an "isness" or a natural state of being. It is the presence of a certain mental attitude, a certain spiritual element or feeling. The one who has it heals quickly, normally, even automatically.

I do not minimize the importance and value of instruction and education. I have written this book for the purpose of instructing and educating. The point to be recognized—the point which curiously enough seems to elude so many—is that the instruction and the education are not the thing itself. They are means to an end, and as such they are important. But they become misleading, restrictive and positively handicapping, when, as too often happens, they are looked on as the end in themselves.

In the case of the chauffeur, it is readily seen that the particular sort of instruction and education he receives is of secondary importance to the state of mind and being that he attains in respect to being a chauffeur. Some courses of instruction are doubtless better and to be preferred to others. Choosing the best and making the most effective use of the one chosen are most important matters in their field. But they are not the determining factors as regards the thing itself. One wishing to become a chauffeur may have the finest instruction and still not be worth anything in the practical work of driving a car. Another may pick up his instruction in the most nonchalant and irregular fashion, and still drive a car with the art and skill of a Paderewski at the pianoforte. The test of merit is not the instruction, but the attainments and accomplishments of the one who has been instructed.

The metaphysician is like the chauffeur, and both of

them are like the rest of us, and this notwithstanding that the distinction between the method of instruction and the fact of the attainments of the individual—the effect of the instruction as demonstrated by what the individual actually is and does—is so generally overlooked, especially by the experts in instruction and education.

There is no such thing as an average human being. The average is what everybody is, lumped together and divided by the number of everybodies that there are. The result is what nobody actually is. Yet we try to standardize and systematize our educational processes to suit this suppositional nobody. We are surprised that the result is a monotone humanity, fearful of initiative, fearful of independent thinking, fearful of the unexpected and untried, open to every sort of an authoritative suggestion from the advertisement in the street car to the solemn say-so of physician and clergyman.

However necessary instruction may be, there is no possible sacredness and sanctity that adhere to or are gathered up by the means that are employed to give instruction, not even by the means that are employed to give religious instruction. There is never any assurance that what gives good instruction under the influence and direction of one person will give equally good instruction under the administration of another person. It is the spirit of the instructor which gives the real value to the instruction. When the right spirit is not there, the resulting uninspired reliance on the form and letter means failure to instruct and educate men and women in that independence of thought and freedom of action so important to their individual growth and success.

The insistent demand of humanity is for systematized routine and sure-fire formulas. In connection with mental healing, there is always an audience for the man or

woman who will tell exactly how it is done. Whether they would accomplish it by rhythmic breathing or some other equally captivating activity, or whether they specialize in the magic phrase to be recited so many times a day, the oracles rise up and flourish for a time. These heralds of the infallible method have only to be personally honest, personally sincere and personally convinced that they have the infallible method—and many of them are all that and perhaps a few other things besides—to be not only assured of a following, but assured also of a certain amount of successful healing.

They are bound to get results with certain types of mentality so long as the novelty lasts and the freshness and spontaneity of the interest is maintained. It is when these wear away, and must be succeeded by individual initiative thinking in order to hold the ground gained physically by going forward mentally, that the real test of the soundness of the method comes. It will then be discovered that not in formulated ways or words is the actual healing quality itself to be found and imprisoned, and that no way of doing things and no combination of phrases can be adhered to beyond a certain point without the whole business making for mental staleness and boredom.

To a great many, passages from the Bible, breathing the spirit of a great faith, a great hope, a great passion for righteousness and selfless idealism, are a tremendous inspiration, lifting those, to whom they come with especial force and conviction, out of the work-a-day world into the realm of spiritual perception and illumination, and inducing the state of mind which brings forth healing.

But the verses of the Bible are not in themselves an infallible means for bringing the conviction of spiritual reality. Time and time again, devoted readers of the

Bible have become so accustomed to the look and sound of the words, have so long associated certain meanings with certain words, are so in the habit of approaching the Bible in an artificial mental state of peculiarly sentimentalized piety and solemnity, that they have become incapable of getting any new meaning or fresh light from Scriptural passages.

They are mistaking a self-induced and rather egotistically satisfactory emotionalism for spiritual inspiration and communion with the infinite truth. Even one for whom the Bible has a living and unfolding message finds that specific texts lose something of their vivifying quality after too much familiarity. They become for the time being dead ashes as far as giving any impetus to spiritual understanding is concerned. This is when they have been read and repeated so many times that vital thinking about them has ceased.

One knows very well that he is deliberately passing by the broadest road to immediate attention and popularity when he does not claim to have the sure and unfailing method, and does not proclaim the catchy slogan as a panacea for all ills. Yet, how obvious it is that the law, which is an attitude, a state of mind, a viewpoint, which finds its culmination in perception, inspiration and realization, can be coordinated only superficially and temporarily with the by-paths and alleys into which the human mind is continually dodging as possible short cuts to the destination of understanding.

The simplicity, the directness, the naturalness and the sanity of the mental and spiritual quality, which makes the law of healing spontaneously operative, is opposed all along the line to the characteristic psychology of the human mind, so given to tricking itself into the mental state it deems desirable instead of going straight for it.

For example, the memory expert does not instruct his pupils how to remember as a direct, unadorned accomplishment. He takes them around circles within circles of associated objects and notions for the purpose of getting them to remember without actually realizing that they are remembering.

In the various methods and modes of mental treatment, there is almost always more or less of the same psychological trickery brought into play, though usually without cognizing it and with the best of intentions. One is instructed to fix his thought on such a broad statement as "God is Love, therefore Love is all and there is no hate," perhaps to say these words or others like them over many times either to himself or out loud. It is a splendid thing to realize what these words mean, and in the realizing to have one's thought active and alive to the necessity of clarity, definiteness and intelligence in the perceptions and conclusions arrived at. If, however, one goes into a dreamy ecstasy or a kind of somnambulancy, in which he mistakes saying the words for thinking what they mean, it is plain that no great good is going to be brought out by the "treatment."

Again, one may be told that a treatment should be made up of affirmations of the truth and denials of the errors both in a general and a specific way, of arguments fitted to the case under consideration for the purpose of proving the contention for the reality of good health as against the suggestion of the presence of ill health. One may even go so far as to keep a list of the good to be affirmed and the evil to be denied, lest some one thing on either side of the controversy be overlooked.

At an early stage in the development of the student of metaphysics, all this may have a real meaning and serve a legitimate purpose, but manifestly its awakening power

is soon exhausted. After that, it becomes a wearying and intelligence-deadening routine far more apt to produce evils in one's self than to rid others of them.

Whatever the line of approach may be, the conclusion of all formalities of word and phrase is the always favorite habit of repeating again and again out loud or to one's self statements which may be in themselves beautiful, true and inspiring, but which, reiterated in parrot-like fashion, have no more meaning or vitality than the singsong recitation of the multiplication table as one used to hear it in the old style country school.

But, you say, the children did learn the multiplication table. Perhaps they did, but they never learned to multiply by that sort of a recitative. After a time, it did dawn on some of the children that what they were saying had a mathematical meaning. After making this discovery, those children learned to multiply. But it is probable that these exceptionally bright children would have come to the perception of the meaning of the multiplication table a great deal more quickly had they been given a little intelligent instruction instead of being left to the chance of finding out for themselves, while it is positively certain that many of the children never did find out what the multiplication table was about. To this day some of them are counting on their fingers. Automatic reciting always has a tendency to put the mental faculties to sleep as the rocking of a cradle will put a baby to sleep.

The conclusion that one must come to is that any and all methods and ways, any and all statements and texts that are awakening and inspiring, may be at times helpful, even necessary, in order to steady and direct the human mentality, and are therefore legitimate as temporary means of attaining the desired end of mental and spiritual perception and realization. No methods, ways or words are in

themselves the end to be attained, nor have they in a last analysis anything to do with the end to be attained.

By the same token, some personalities and some environments may seem more conducive than others to the getting and keeping of the desired mental attitude and spiritual state, but they, too, are but transitory elements in the immediate human problem and have no connection with the healing factor itself.

That a mental practitioner should consider it necessary to associate with certain persons or to be in retired, secluded places in order to do healing work is a personal peculiarity to be catered to as little as possible. The best and the most important healing will never be done in the cloister or in the religious retreat or anywhere else that may be supposed to serve the purpose of keeping the mental worker free from the distractions and confusions of ordinary human living.

To carry his message of spiritual reality to all mankind, not as one set apart, but as one most evidently in unity with all mankind, is the true mission of those in whom and through whom the law of healing is most consciously and clearly operative. They accomplish this, not as physicians or as priests, but as joyous, compassionate, understanding men and women, whose everyday living counts heavily for all that is worthy and worthwhile.

CHAPTER XVIII

The Good and the Bad of Diagnosis

Summary: The human tendency is to use old methods and ways in trying out new concepts—The new concept of mental healing naturally took over some of the customs of materia medica practice—One of these customs was the diagnosis of disease from physical symptoms—Physical diagnosis is confessedly inaccurate and uncertain—The falsity of the claim that certain specific mental states express themselves in certain specific types of physical disease—Recurrence of the same physical symptoms is not necessarily a recurrence of the same disease as a mental condition—Human beings have disease habits as they have other habits—Disease has of itself neither entity nor continuity—Instantaneous healing—The tendency of mental practitioners to make limiting rules for themselves should be recognized and overcome.

It is habitual in human affairs, when a fresh concept is being tried out, to make use of old ways and means—to attempt at first to adapt the new to them and to change the customary only in such necessary minor details as will make it amenable to the novel concept. In the course of time the new asserts itself more and more dominantly, until at length it develops and establishes its own external processes and forms or else so radically revises and remodels the old as to make them fairly satisfactory instruments for its purposes.

When some one conceived the idea of a motor-driven vehicle, he took the shafts off the horse-drawn buggy, put in a motor, geared the power to the rear wheels, arranged a steering handle, and the product of the clumsy adaptation of the old to the new became the first automobile. It has taken a number of years of evolution to make the modern motor car which is intended to be as attractive

appearing and as efficiently acting as a motor-driven vehicle can be.

Even at that, it is more than probable if an originally minded automotive engineer could really get the old horse-drawn wagon out of his head and actually design a motor car which would be only a motor car and in no way a leftover of all the vehicle attainments of the ages, he might produce something quite unlike in appearance and more effective in performance than the automobile as we know it.

When the concept of the mental healing of physical disease began to make its way in human affairs, it was natural and entirely in line with the human way of doing things for the new concept of healing the sick to take over some of the characteristic attitudes and methods of materia medica practice.

One of the most alluring and tempting of these materia medica methods was the custom of examining physical symptoms for the purpose of finding out what was the matter with the patient, and then fooling one's self into believing that he really had found out when he gave his findings, and the conclusions he drew from them, the disease-name bestowed by scholastic medical authority on those particular external circumstances and conditions. This weighty and solemn process is known as diagnosis, and it is so reverenced in medical circles that it is rapidly becoming the exclusive prerogative of the specialists.

It is true that the mental practitioner has always inclined—theoretically, at any rate—towards making a mental instead of a physical diagnosis. Still the general tendency among such practitioners, when they yield to the diagnosis custom, is to lay weight on the materia medica names for disease, to want to know what the doctor's opinion is, and even at times to require a physician's pro-

nunciamento as an important step in more effectively healing the patient by means of mental treatment. All this is fairly indicative of the practitioner's genuine, though perhaps unconscious, faith in the materia medica diagnosis of disease and also in some of materia medica's claims and methods in connection with the healing of disease.

Materia medica aims to make a science of physical diagnosis, a science of classifying symptoms and of naming diseases, a science of determining whether or not a disease is curable, a science of treatment in the cases that treatment is expected to heal. It links together specific physical symptoms with specific causes and effects. In short its entire practice is built on the claim that a physical diagnosis, properly and professionally made, is trustworthy and sure. Theoretically materia medica stands or falls on the soundness of its position in regard to physical diagnosis.

Yet, confessedly the accuracy of any physician's diagnosis is an open question—as much a matter of clever guess work as of real knowledge—and it is admitted that the percentage of cases correctly diagnosed by even the specialists in that line is comparatively small. The dogmatism of materia medica makes such a result inevitable, for the materia medica practitioner is obliged—in order to save the face of his profession at the expense of his own—to record an incorrect diagnosis in every instance where a patient with a disease declared to be incurable gets well, and in other instances when a patient dies of a disease supposed to be of minor import.

All diagnosis of a physical nature, whether by a materia medica physician or by a mental practitioner, and all diagnosis from the standpoint of the belief that there is a logical or lawful interplay sufficiently definite to permit of a generalization between mental states and phys-

ical conditions, have their reason for being in a prevalent, though questionable, theory held by both materia medica and mental practitioners that there is a God-established or Nature-ordained relationship between inharmonious mental concepts and specific types of physical disease.

The materia medica doctor and the mental healer approach the situation from different sides. The doctor is interested almost exclusively in the physical symptoms, which he claims give him the trustworthy key to the patient's condition bodily, nervously, mentally. The mental healer would claim that certain states of mind are always associated with certain types of disease, that jealousy, for example, will always be outlined on the body in a definite, specific type of physical disease. He would argue from this that if a patient has a certain mental viewpoint or condition, he will invariably have a certain physical disease, and, looking at it the other way, if he has a certain physical disease, it is because he is indulging a certain particular state of erroneous belief.

All claims that there is a fixed and constant coordination between certain mental concepts and certain external manifestations are fundamentally false. They are the outcome of the untenable view that there is equal reality in both good and evil, equal permanence and truth, equal law and logic. The consequence of accepting this error in the premise is a misunderstanding and a misinterpretation of the entire human experience.

It is true that there are modes, habits, customs, traditions, in the realm of mental beliefs, which are automatically expressed in a routine of external manifestations, until the order of their coming and going is broken up by intelligent thinking and the refusal any longer to submit to dominating suggestion.

All this, however, is chance and circumstance in which there is neither logic nor reason. The superficial pronouncements that declare a system of law and order on the basis of such conditions are faulty and imperfectly rounded human opinions only, necessarily of a temporary nature, always open to revision and refutation under the light of a clearer comprehension of the truth.

The names which a diagnosis of disease from the standpoint just outlined fastens on the physical conditions of patients—cancer, consumption, high blood pressure, low vitality—become centers of deeply engrained mesmerism, but they are not actual determinators of the patient's fate nor are they the final decree regarding the nature of the difficulty from which he is suffering either mentally or physically.

Even as a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, so a disease under any other name would be as deadly, provided mesmerism as deadly haunted the name. By the same token, these disease-names around which gather so much dread and fear may be some time—indeed, occasionally are now—disassociated from their deadliness by the refusal of an awakening humanity any longer to endure the rule of the mesmerism at present so closely linked with them.

The insistent suggestion, occurring and recurring in various forms—some of them obvious, others exceedingly subtle—that there is a fixed relationship between mental states of an inharmonious nature and the diseases that afflict the human body, besets the mental practitioners of all schools. This leads to attempts by superficial thinkers and immature or inexperienced mental healers to classify mental conditions more or less definitely either in terms of physical disease or as the specific and definite causes of specific and definite types of physical disease.

Some mental practitioners even go so far as to outline in their minds, and sometimes on paper, an embryo mental-medical dictionary purporting to uncover and fix for all time this supposed consistent relationship between certain mental conditions and certain physical ailments. They might claim—though I am not inferring that these are the actual claims of anybody—that hate causes cancer, that envy causes consumption, and so on through the whole long list of materia medica's diagnosed and named diseases.

This notion makes a peculiarly strong appeal to the many human beings who are still primitively on the search in the mental and spiritual realm of perceptions and realizations, just as they are on the search in the realm of material sense testimony for tangible and established processes and conditions that they can touch, taste, hear, see, smell. Their demands are illogical and their search is in vain. Spiritual perceptions and realizations are themselves the witnesses to their reality and truth. The processes of perception and realization are to be discovered and discerned only in their own realm of individual consciousness.

Furthermore, and this is the climactically important evidence against the claim, if it is true that a fixed relationship exists between a specific mental state and a specific physical condition, and that some physical diseases are of themselves testimony to the presence of certain mental beliefs, this materialistic routine would fasten upon mankind unbreakable chains of material reality and make it the irredeemable victim of the crushing, unescapable fate which cannot be separated from material reality.

In specific instances, the mental state known as hate may be outlined on the mental state known as the physical

body in the form of the mental state known as cancer, and the mental state known as jealousy or envy may be similarly outlined on the body in what is known as consumption. But it is not true that hate or any other particular mental state always produces cancer or consumption. Nor is it true that the presence of cancer is always the indication of the presence of any especial mental element, or that consumption can always be traced to any single mental condition.

One may hate and one may be jealous to the limit of human feeling and capacity and not be physically ill because of it, so natural and normal to their personality is the brutishness expressed by some human beings. On the other hand, one may have what seems to be the most devastating of physical diseases without the apparent existence of any adequate mental cause for it—that is to say, according to customary human views. Many, many human beings are ill because of their human virtues, their unwise and unintelligent devotion to a humanly idealistic but narrow and even mistaken concept of life—quite as many, one is apt to conclude, if he has a touch of the ironical in his makeup, as are ill because of their human faults.

There may also be repeated manifestations of the same physical symptoms and the same physical disease, and yet the person afflicted may not have from a mental standpoint the same disease at all. Thus one might have a burst of anger, which might be expressed on the body in the form of a head cold. At another time, he might become depressed over business, and this mental state might also result physically in a head cold. He might have a multitude of other mental experiences, and all of them might affect him physically in the form of a head cold.

According to a physical diagnosis, he would be suffering every time from the same difficulty, while a sound

mental diagnosis would show that in each case he was suffering from a different state of mind expressed in a physical way habitual to the personal belief of the sufferer.

Human beings have personal beliefs and peculiarities in the manifestation of disease as in other things. They have distinct disease habits. It would seem with some personalities as if disease-experience had marked the personal mentality as a spring torrent marks the side of a mountain. During the summer drought, there will not be a trace of water in the dry bed of the stream. Vegetation of rank hot weather growth may obscure all signs of it. But next spring's freshet will find the old channel and come tumbling down the mountain side exactly as did last spring's freshet. However, it is not the same freshet for all the similarity in action and looks.

It should be understood about disease, as about all other material phenomena, that there is no continuity in the disease itself, that it is not an independent entity manifesting and developing itself according to its own rules and regulations. If it can be even a little grasped regarding disease, as regarding other material phenomena, that each new moment of externalization is a newly born expression of the contemporaneous state of mind or momentary belief, and that the expression has of itself no historical past, no present entity and no pre-determined future, the problem of healing specific cases of disease will be vastly simplified.

The actual condition, as contrasted with what appears to be the condition, may be illustrated by referring again to the film of the moving picture. When this is run through the moving picture machine at a certain rate of speed, there appears on the screen a continuous action duplicating the impression made on the material sense of sight by the customary actions of human beings. Quicken the

speed or slow it down, and while there still seems to be a resemblance to human activity, the impression produced is one of grotesqueness and falsity.

Examine the film itself, and you will find that it is made up of a series of entirely separate pictures, each one complete in itself and representing all by itself a distinct moment of action. It is possible to take out a single picture at any point and not harm in the least any of the other pictures, though it is not possible to take out single pictures without breaking somewhat the appearance of continuity in the manifestation on the screen. If enough single pictures are taken out, the impression of continuity will be destroyed.

The human experience called disease, like the human experience called life, manifested on the screen of momentary externalization and viewed by the material senses, seems to be a continuity with a past, a present and a future, all of them apparently real and true of themselves, with entity and actuality abiding in them. Let the human experience be either speeded up or retarded, and it becomes terrifying or benumbing to human beings, who have become accustomed to a certain pace, which they call normal and right.

In reality, however, there is neither past nor future as a continuity in itself to either the disease experience or the human life experience. There is the immediate present instant, which is the immediate present manifestation, not of itself at all, but of the state of belief of some personality. Even as the moving picture film may be cut at any point without marring any of the other separate pictures on the film, so the human life experience in its detail, be it disease or anything else, may be cut off at the point of the immediate present by a change of mental and spiritual concept, and without harming in the least the

other pictures of the immediately externalized concepts of the personality involved. Untoward elements in the immediate manifestation can thereby be instantaneously stopped and eliminated, and entirely new and different manifestations can appear when and where they are desirable.

This is the explanation of the experience known as instantaneous physical healing. It does not involve a change of physical conditions according to the human concept, nor a sudden and rapid improvement of conditions according to materia medica laws. It is the replacing of an old, unsatisfactory, material sense of life and being by a new and better sense in the ways that have been consciously or unconsciously especially emphasized by the personalities involved, the healer and the patient.

Those who have ever experienced instantaneous healing know that the mind and spirit are oftentimes first affected by what may be likened to a flash of realization and conviction, and the physical change is commonly felt as actually taking place under the impulsion of the new vision and inspiration. The sensation is of an unwarranted or detached something leaving the body or a cloud of deception or misconception being taken away from the mind.

In many instances, the certainty of being already well precedes the actual physical manifestation of health by a perceptible period of time. Although for the moment the physical symptoms may be unchanged, and therefore afford no confirmation of the mental conviction of healing, this apparent contradiction of the mental state by the bodily condition is not in the least disturbing, nor does it lessen confidence in the truth of the mental conviction of healing.

I have had this experience of instantaneous healing several times, the conviction of healing coming in what

seemed like an electric shock except that it was a shock primarily to the mind and only secondarily to the body, a mental and spiritual light or illumination with a definite physical feeling throughout the body of a change from sickness to health. These experiences were as positive and genuine as anything of a human kind could be, and they were without excitement or emotional sentimentalism though naturally exhilarating and inspiring to a marked degree. The lasting impression they have left is that the mental and spiritual conviction at once expressed itself physically without regard for medical laws or progressive stages of development from a condition of sickness to one of freedom from sickness.

Because the outward appearance is a state of mind externalized and not an entity in itself, it is possible instantaneously to change the outward, and that without regard to the human laws, opinions and beliefs, materia medica or otherwise, that may seem to be involved. This is accomplished by changing the state of mind responsible for the manifestation. The ease or the difficulty, with which the changes in the appearance are brought about, is determined always by the flexibility or fixity of the state of mind and never by the aspect or character of the outward appearance.

Inasmuch as there is no fixed relationship between the inharmonious and deluded states of mind which bring forth suffering in the human experience, and the various types and names of disease classified by materia medica and the beliefs and laws held by materia medica about them, it follows as a matter of course that the physical diagnosis of disease, according to the rules of materia medica, is not fundamentally important to the mental healer.

Whether it is or is not helpful in specific cases depends

upon the immediate mental attitude of the practitioner or the patient. There is nothing to be feared from a medical diagnosis, but it should be understood that it can go no further than its own quality and point of view. Its quality is superstitious, its point of view is material.

If one holds that a physical diagnosis is fundamentally necessary or even helpful in the mental healing of disease, he must also admit that the one important thing for a prospective mental healer to do is to take the regular course at some reliable medical school and thus prepare himself to make his own medical diagnoses according to the most up-to-date materia medica methods and theories. This would also involve constant review of the old ways and study of the new theories in order to keep up with the changing opinions of the medical authorities.

To carry on such an arrangement may not seem unreasonable to one who has had little or no experience in the practice of mental and spiritual healing, to one who still believes mental and spiritual healing to be some kind of a method of mental manipulation in order to produce the appearance of physical good health. The experienced mental practitioner, if he has any spiritual insight at all, knows the futility of expecting any radical or permanent change in the patient's condition, if he can go no further than a manipulation of the patient's personal mentality by his own personal mentality. He knows how distracting to a sound perception of mental cause and effect is the constant intrusion of suggestions regarding the symptoms and laws of specifically named and outlined physical diseases.

Occasionally a materia medica physician becomes a practitioner of mental and spiritual healing. I think I am safe in saying that practically all of them will testify that their success in the mental field has been in proportion to

their ability to unlearn and leave behind the laws, the claims and the names that were taught them in the medical school.

In a last analysis, the mental healer must stand solidly on the proposition that a knowledge of physical symptoms, the names of physical diseases and the materia medica laws held regarding symptoms and diseases are neither a necessity nor a help to him. He must come to the conclusion that he already knows all that is of advantage for him to know about materia medica, when he understands that the entire materia medica system is built on superstition and not on truth.

His ordinary human experience has brought him, and will continue to bring him for some time to come, quite enough materia medica suggestions to keep him busy freeing himself from their beliefs. Especially is this so, when one is confronted with the round of human ills and suffering, as the mental healer is sure to be. All such suggestions must be discerned and dealt with intelligently, and in the overcoming of them the healer will find that more and more pronouncedly he is automatically taking care of all the materia medica claims that are real to him. To load himself with more beliefs, under the mistaken notion that by so doing he is helping himself to get rid of the beliefs he already has, is foolish and contradictory.

Unfortunately, one who does not know better can make all sorts of limiting rules for himself, which he will have to fulfill or get free from in order to heal. He can rule that he must be in a quiet place in order to heal, that he must have a certain book with him, that he must go through certain forms of affirmation and denial, that he must name specifically certain persons or conditions, that he must know what materia medica calls the disease and what materia medica holds to be the laws controlling the

disease, that he must explore the mental states of the patient's family back through the third and fourth generations.

If the healer is sufficiently convinced that any or all of these rules or other similar rules must be complied with before he can heal the sick, then he surely will not be able to heal the sick until he complies with the rules that he has laid down for himself.

But this is entirely a personal problem. It has nothing to do with healing the sick as an impersonal proposition. All of us make foolish, limiting rules about the majority of our activities, because we are foolish, limited human beings. Our success in life and our success in healing depends on getting free from the rules that hold us so much in bondage. Surely we should not add to their number nor strengthen their claim of power over us.

Self-knowledge, therefore, and not a knowledge of materia medica, is the prime essential. With enlarging self-knowledge will come a growing ability to face human conditions as they actually appear to be to the human senses. To do this is the first step in demonstrating an ability to cope with human conditions and make them a little more what they should be in order to promote harmonious human living. He who is able, because he knows himself well enough to know what his state of mind really is, to be honestly and squarely afraid when he is afraid, has taken a long step towards not being afraid. He has done this because he has proved his dominion over the greatest of all fears, the fear of being afraid.

Still another limitation, under which mental practitioners almost universally labor, is the conviction, left over from materia medica habits of practice, that a certain amount of time and attention must be personally given to each one who applies to them for help. This allotment

must be in the form of a specially delivered present or absent treatment. This characteristic phase of materia medica practice, translated into the terms of mental practice, means thinking, or trying to think, so many minutes out of every twenty-four hours about each person whom one has taken for a patient.

Most mental practitioners are almost unbelievably conscientious in giving personal mental treatments along the lines outlined. They firmly believe that their patients will not be healed unless they do so. They devote hours and hours a day to giving treatments of this personal sort. And they oftentimes get splendid results, for they are honest and consecrated. They fulfill to the letter the law of their belief, and their efforts are rewarded accordingly.

That such a system of practice is necessary, except as personal belief makes it temporarily so, or that it is necessary for all practitioners regardless of their personal beliefs, is quite another question. My experience is that it is not always necessary. In some instances it may appear to be, and in such instances it is a valuable temporary expedient. As a positive rule of practice, however, it has no more reason for being than has any other claim of limitation.

If one were called upon to address a gathering of five thousand persons, it is not inconceivable that he might speak the truth with so much vision and conviction that every one who heard would be healed of some phase of physical inharmony. This would be a tremendous accomplishment, to be sure, but it is not beyond one's comprehension as a possibility.

The unspoken word of clear, vital thinking is quite as powerful as any spoken word. It is this clear, vital thinking which gives the spoken or written word whatever conviction or power it seems to possess. It is not beyond

credence to expect the time when by his unspoken word the enlightened and intelligent mental practitioner will heal his five thousand or his ten thousand—unlimited numbers of those who turn for their succor and guidance to the light that he keeps burning by the quality of his thinking, his living, his being.

CHAPTER XIX

The Practice of Mental Healing

Summary: The analogy between the artist and the mental healer—In its highest sense the practice of mental healing is the being of one's self—The mental healer is not a haphazard worker—Importance of the attitude of mind and spirit that one spontaneously has—The need of a vital and impersonal interest in the human problem—It is impossible to lay down fixed rules for the practice of mental healing—Regarding treatments—They should not be made a fetish—Why it is natural for mental and spiritual healing to take place—The number of patients a practitioner should treat in a day—Outline of an orthodox treatment—Steps which lead out of the common limitations placed on mental practice.

If one were to go to a master of portrait painting and ask how to paint a picture, he might be given much valuable information about form and color, perspective and pose, much knowledge about the history and traditions of painting and the ways of painters. All this would be interesting and in a measure helpful. But it would not make him a painter. A painter has to make himself or he never will be a painter, notwithstanding all the instruction and advice and criticism that may be showered upon him.

Mental healing has some of the aspects of a learned profession, but more of the peculiar characteristics of a fine art. Its practitioners require schooling and experience—education along special lines as do lawyers, clergymen and physicians. In other and more important ways, mental healing demands the same esprit—the talent, the gift, the predilection, the intuitive insight—that marks the poet, the painter and the musician. All these—the artist

and the mental healer quite as well as the professional and business man—know the tools they work with, and they deal intelligently and purposefully with what to them are the realities of life, even though they may not agree that values can always be entered in daybooks and ledgers.

Healing the sick mentally is much more than a process or system of arguing to one's self or another concerning a theory about God and man. It is more than making forcible statements in connection with this theory or any theory, when confronted with inharmonious phases of human experience.

Healing the sick is the natural effect of living the truth —of living truthfully and intelligently. The practice of mental healing does not consist of talking about spiritual possibilities or probabilities and their theoretical relations to human affairs, including the physical ills and other woes of mankind, and then going through a silent mental performance which is supposed to make these theories and speculations workable in human living.

The practice of mental healing in its highest sense is the being of one's true self. It is realizing and manifesting one's individuality. It is being both the representative and the representation of the highest ideal of righteousness and intelligence that one can conceive of at the moment. One has reason to expect that to the extent his worthy and wise life ideal is realized, this idealistic quality in his thinking and living, modicum though it be, will be spontaneously and naturally expressed in his works. He will find himself getting freer from mechanics, systems, modes and methods—enjoying a consistently enlarging and increasingly helpful human life.

The mental healer is not a haphazard worker because he is not always able to explain in words the way in which he obtains his results—because in specific cases he cannot

state exactly what he did to bring about what was accomplished. The state of mind which follows a system or unfolds an argument, and the state of mind which reaches for and is receptive to spiritual perception and realization, are entirely different. The same person may have them, but he will not have them at the same time.

It is hoped that the preceding chapters of this book have presented arguments and points of view indicating that mental and spiritual healing is reasonable and lawful, and have given a philosophical and metaphysical outlook on the problem of human living, broadening to the understanding and strengthening to the spiritual conviction. These are what the canvas, the brushes and the colors are to the painter—excellent and necessary things. But it is not they that do the painting. The mind and hand of the artist must be there to use them intelligently and effectively, if anything is to be accomplished that will add to the world's treasures of the beautiful and true.

What is it that makes artists? Something nobler than personal ambition. It is the overwhelming and unconquerable desire to be an artist. It is the surging artistic impulse which must be expressed and which urges indefatigable labors with the chosen medium of expression until this becomes plastic to the compelling idea or concept. Consecration, devotion, sincerity and that genuine quality known as artistic conscience, which will starve the body rather than affront the spiritual ideal of beauty and truth, all have a share in fashioning the artist.

Of stuff like to this is also made the forward-reaching mental healer, though at the present time his really admirable qualities of sacrifice and service are far too apt to be shrouded by over-emphasized religious sentimentalism. Notwithstanding this lapse by the many, devotion to the idea—not devotion to the church, the school or the

person—does now and will always characterize the few who by their compelling achievements are actually advancing the cause of mental and spiritual healing.

Far more important, then, than anything that the mental healer may do or say, is the attitude of mind and heart that he spontaneously has. Forced by his calling to stand constantly against the obvious testimony of his own personal senses and that of others, he is often in the position of the mathematician, who assumes that certain conditions, not immediately apparent, are so in order to prove that they are so. Such assumptions are wholly justifiable provided that they are intelligently and honestly made.

Assumptions are not legitimate unless they lead directly to the demonstration of their legitimacy. They are not of themselves the real thing, and they never take the place of the real thing. Used, as they sometimes are, as a substitute for demonstration, in order to make a temporary effect, or for the purpose of deceiving one's self and deceiving others, they produce a deplorable condition of moral perversion. Those under its spell become unbalanced in their human judgments and for the time being incapable of making trustworthy discriminations between ordinary right and wrong. This is a condition that the mental healer is particularly susceptible to, but one from which a little sound sense will save him.

It is to be expected that the one who embarks on the enterprise of mental healing will have a vital interest in the human problem quite apart from the personal business of making a living and getting on in the world. Mental healing is not work for the unsuccessful or the unscrupulous among mankind. Even when the politically minded and the personally dominating seem to make a success of it—at least to the extent of getting place and power for themselves—it is at a desperate cost to others, paid in

terms of spiritual degeneracy and mental degradation, and at a cost to themselves still greater, though not at once perhaps put down in black and white so that all may read it.

The mental healer should strive to be a good traveller on the journey of human experience. He should learn to take things as they come and make the best of them. He must neither be put out of countenance by the bitter nor unduly entranced by the sweet. Always he must be the life of the party. His resources for getting good out of what seems to be the worst that can be must be inexhaustible. If it is shipwreck, then shipwreck must be the great worthwhile incident of the journey.

Details of themselves become of less and less account to this life traveller, but the spirit that is maintained, the attitude that is taken, the joy and the uplift that are gained, when the odds are greatest rather than when all is according to schedule, are seen to be what counts most heavily for satisfaction and refreshment.

The open door and the unfolding way are ever before the mental healer. He is not like the business man who expects to make his pile and then retire to enjoy it. That is, to be sure, a foolish ambition on the part of the business man, who usually finds, when the time comes for him to give up, that he is confronted by the tragi-comic situation of being owned by the business, of which he believed himself to be the master. He may be willing enough to quit the business, but he is dismayed to discover that the business will not quit him. Nothing else in the wide, wide world interests him, nothing else can save him from the disaster of having time on his hands in which to think. He is obliged to continue serving the business, because the business owns him body and soul.

With the mental healer, there is always before him the

next step, the fresh possibility, the supreme attainment. His practice may begin with the monotonous round of seeing and visiting sick persons—as like the monotonous round of the materia medica physician as are two peas in a pod. But before it has time to become monotonous to him, the mental healer, if he has any kind of success, is bound to find his interests and practice expanding into broader channels. He becomes both physician and priest without the professionalism or the formalities of either, and in addition he is business counsellor, family friend, general guide and inspirer in manifold lines of human activity.

It is not possible to lay down fixed rules for the practice of mental healing. It is not possible to state how a mental treatment should be given, how often a patient should be treated, how long a treatment should last, what one should take up in a treatment, whether or not there are certain claims or beliefs that should be dealt with in every treatment. There are plenty of mental healers who will readily make dogmatic statements on all these points and a number of others besides, but they do it because they are still under the mesmerism of ecclesiasticism and materia medica.

It should be recognized that a mental treatment is not of the slightest worth or account taken by itself without the individual, not the personal, quality of the ones who are interested in the treatment. What counts is the mental and spiritual perception of the giver of the treatment cooperating with the mental and spiritual openness of the recipient of the treatment. It is never the act of treatment that heals. Some time formal treatments will become obsolete as drugs are becoming obsolete. Even now the quickest and most efficient mental healing is done without treatment as all mental healers know, their patients every once

in a while having a way of getting well before they are treated. This is disconcerting until the healer perceives that it is the natural thing to expect.

The mental healer must get it thoroughly established as the basic concept regarding his work that it is not what he does but what he is that heals the sick. This is another way of saying that it is the spirit animating and vitalizing his thinking and being—the spirit which he normally expresses—that is responsible for whatever healing power he exercises.

This is a fairly clear and reasonable statement to make —a statement easily understood and one that will be quite generally accepted offhand as true. Yet when it comes to actual practice, mental healers are apt to forget the value of being and to work themselves into states of emotional excitement and nervous tension by too zealously and emphatically trying to do something to make their patients well. They have no real faith that a single one of their patients will be healed unless the healers themselves go through the particular variety of mental performance which to them signifies healing the sick. The reason for this is that they really do not believe in the power of the spirit. Their faith is actually in their treatments—those poor, frail human expedients which have no more genuine potency than have the materia medica physician's pills and powders.

Every one has to start where he can start. The mental healer has to start with treatments and continue with treatments so long as he considers treatments necessary. All mental healers at the present time give treatments, and it is right that they should. It is the best that they can do. At the present stage of human development, we all need—some more, some less—specific things to do, defi-

nite things to say, in order to bring consciousness to a higher level somewhat above the grosser assaults of material sense.

Just as the child in studying arithmetic may need the diagrams of long and short division to guide him, so the mental healer may need to assure himself in formal ways of the truth of spiritual reality, the falsity of material sense testimony, the beauty and harmony of the individuality of man. He may need at times, when the mesmerism of evil suggestion and fear touches his thought, to go into much detail with his arguments in order to reassure himself of the facts of true being.

The proper, reasonable use of the mental treatment as a temporary expedient is one thing. Making a fetish and a holy thing of the mental treatment—limiting one's self and others to its use under all circumstances—is another thing. In order to get free and to keep free from this limitation, the mental treatment must be seen for what it is—a specific mode to be specifically employed, and not a universal regulation or a divine ordinance.

The single important and essential element in one's healing work is provided by the thoughts one thinks expressed in the life one lives. To the extent that this mental "isness" embodies and manifests the enlarging and ennobling ideals of Truth and Love, it is the healing power for all mankind, unlimited in itself and limited in its recognized effects only by the personally accepted mesmerism of immediate custom and tradition.

When one casts aside labels and analyzes quality, he will find it difficult to draw a dividing line between plain, unadorned mental suggestion and the mental treatments of those practitioners who put so much emphasis on rule and routine. Whenever the element of self-conscious argu-

ment and mental direction enters in—and it is difficult to see how one can separate argument from a certain amount of personal determination—there comes in also a strong tendency towards more or less deceptive mental manipulation. One is quite justified in holding that the ideal mental treatment is not specifically given at all. It is made manifest or demonstrated by results.

After all is said and done, healing takes place, not because somebody does something, but because it is the nature of man to be progressive and to express the fact of spiritual reality in terms of more harmonious human living. It is the experience here and now that like attracts like in mental and spiritual quality. The individual consciousness, imbued with a sense of spiritual reality and truth, has a natural attractiveness for all or any who desire or need a more conscious conviction of spiritual reality in order to improve the quality of their human experience.

A sick person is one who temporarily is not conscious of normal progress and development along wholesome, sane lines. It is natural for him to seek the light and guidance to be had from a consciousness somewhat free from the limitations and delusions that momentarily beset him, and it is natural for his blindness to normal progress to be dissipated by the light radiating from this freer consciousness.

The result is the phenomenon known as mental and spiritual healing. What are considered as the necessary mental activities and human conditions to bring about this result, are really essential or unessential just to the extent that they are held to be so by personal human belief. The processes and customs, associated with mental and spiritual healing, are actually no more a part of the healing, and no more necessary to bring forth the healing, than

are the processes and customs associated with materia medica practice.

Clinging to the processes and customs of mental healing beyond a certain point of recognized temporary expediency becomes destructive to genuine spirituality, throws the mental practitioner into the field of materia medica, and makes him—unconsciously, unwittingly and unintentionally, perhaps, but nevertheless actually—a mental manipulator, whose dogmatism and slavery to routine and personal authority are as pronounced and bigoted as those of any old line doctor or preacher.

The mental healer should expect to learn as he goes, and to practice differently tomorrow from what he does today. He should become more and more self-reliant while he grows less self-opinionated and aggressive. He should always feel free to use the best temporary human way as an instrument handy for his purpose, but he should never feel himself dependent upon any human ways. He should recognize that his practice and his methods are the expression of his individuality. He can learn always from others, but he can never follow any other human being unreservedly. He must always adapt the teachings and the practices of others to his own peculiar concepts. He must not expect others to yield their individuality to him any more than he should expect to yield his individuality to others.

Facility of practice comes with experience. No one can say for another how many patients he shall take or how he shall deal with them. No one should rule for another that, because there are so many minutes in an hour and so many working hours in a day, only so many persons should be taken a day as patients by a single practitioner. Beginners in the practice of mental healing are likely to be more mechanical in their ways than those who have made

it part of their work during years of mental practice to get as free as possible from the mechanics that have a trick of becoming attached to a profession or a trade.

Beginners, and those who have especial reverence for rules and customs, may feel that it is necessary to place time and number limits on their practice, as the materia medica physician feels that it is necessary for him to place a space limit on his practice. But as a matter which concerns basically the activity of Mind and Spirit through individual realization of the truth of being, why should not the mental practitioner, whose vision and understanding have developed to that point, heal twenty as well as one, a hundred as well as twenty, and so on without attempting to fix a point where his sphere of usefulness will be complete? It is certain that if his patients are benefited, they will not be troubled about the little or much time that has specifically been bestowed on them.

If one were to outline what would be regarded by the orthodox as an acceptable and sound treatment, it would be somewhat as follows: A treatment consists of the realization and declaration of the allness of God, the denial by name and in specific and definite terms of the type, symptoms, and materia medica laws appertaining to the disease with which the patient is or is supposed to be suffering, the denial by naming them of special temperamental errors believed to be detrimental to the well-being of the patient, the denial by name of general erroneous beliefs looked upon as particularly vicious and dangerous, ending with a final realization and declaration of the allness of good. It is held by many that this mental treatment should be given every patient at least once a day, or else the practitioner is remiss in a duty that he owes the patient.

How does it work out? There are practitioners who

go to their offices at nine o'clock in the morning and see patients at half-hour intervals until late in the afternoon. Sometimes the patients are sent in and out at the ringing of a bell. The patient is talked with, treated along the lines indicated and ushered out. The system is perfect, the practitioner is conscientious, the patient is susceptible, and there is unquestionably some physical healing accomplished.

Is it possible to believe that from such bondage to routine there can emanate any marked sense of individual freedom or any considerable breadth of spiritual vision? It would seem psychologically unlikely that the one who follows such a mental and material routine will escape falling into a mechanical habit of thought and action, which he will automatically go through, not realizing, perhaps, how devitalized and devitalizing the process has become. He is like an actor who has played the same part over and over again until he has unconsciously substituted mechanics for artistic creation. His performance may appear all right and sound all right to the audience, but the art-vitality is not there. Once in a while the actor will unexpectedly be interrupted in his mechanics, and the shock will cause him to forget the lines that he has repeated hundreds of times.

The enlightened mental healer has something better to give to the world than an increased burden of routine, another addition to the mechanics of human living, a mentalized phase of efficiency factory production. If he stands for a broader, freer mental life, he should be able to express a broader, freer type of mental practice. He needs the time and the opportunity to gain mental and spiritual illumination and to live a human life that is the expression of spiritual inspiration. He cannot find this time and opportunity in a habit of practice and a solitude and

starvation of soul which are typical of the monastery.

Even while under the sense that he must give direct treatment to all those who ask him for help, the mental healer will find that he can take a step towards greater freedom by at least not calling his patients by name in his treatments and by habitualizing himself to a reliance on perceptions and feelings—on his peace, confidence and joy —instead of trying to get into personal contact with the patient, making a direct mental appeal to the patient, or always putting into words the truth that he is trying to realize.

By making his argument for harmony an argument about man instead of an argument to or about a named human being, he will soon become assured that the work of the mental healer is to convince himself, and not someone else, of the truth of being. As he finds that the patient responds to this less personal approach quite as readily as he does to the more personal one, the practitioner will cease to feel that he is personally responsible for seeing that his treatment goes to the one for whom it is intended. As he accustoms himself to recognizing and being satisfied with his thinking without the formality of using words to express what he is thinking, the mental practitioner will escape some of the pitfalls of verbal deception into which words, which are so familiar in sound that they have lost their vital meaning, lead one.

Vision is fundamentally necessary for any sort of satisfactory human living, and a mental healer without vision would be an anomaly. To carry him beyond ordinary human ideals and attainments, the vision must be more than one of personal comfort or affluence or association with those who seem most likely humanly to be the promoters of his social or professional ambitions. It must be

a vision of individual nobility and sanity, of mental development, of spiritual consciousness—a vision of causes and not a dream of results.

Clarity of vision depends upon purity of motive and ideal. Purity is that quality which keeps the realm of one's spirit and soul inviolate, which will not allow to enter into this chamber of inspiration and aspiration anything that belittles or defiles or darkens.

There is a mental integrity, a far-reaching sincerity, which, if one has it, makes it impossible for him to deceive either himself or others. Such a one cannot put self-interest before essential righteousness of heart and mind. He cannot convince himself that a thing is right because he personally wants that particular thing to be right.

This integrity should be constantly sought for by the mental healer, and his moral courage should be equal to walking the path that his honesty points out. He who is afraid to do what appeals to him as right, lest he make a mistake or do wrong—who must have the assurance of some personal authority, and thus fool himself into believing that he is not shouldering the responsibility for his acts—will never attain a demonstrable understanding of principle.

CHAPTER XX

The Attainment and Use of Freedom

Summary: How to attain freedom has always been of compelling interest to mankind—The keeping of freedom after it is gained is quite as important—Freedom is usually conceived in terms of material place and power—What mankind actually desires is satisfying self-expression—Without a free spirit material position and gain are sure to be disappointing—How freedom is often thrown away by the indulgence of personal petty idiosyncrasies—Difficulty of making it clear that a revolt against points of view and mental attitudes is not necessarily a revolt against laws and regulations—Dominion contrasted with domination—The eternal life-experience is the present life-experience.

Freedom from the tyranny of material sense testimony, freedom from the oppression of dominating and aggressive personality, freedom from the bondage of limiting customs, traditions and habits, is a goal worth struggling for. How to attain it has always been a speculation of compelling interest to mankind. What to do with it after even a wee bit of it is secured is quite as important a matter. Mankind's failure to get more freedom than it has is largely due to its repeatedly proved inability to use intelligently the freedom it already possesses.

Freedom is usually inferiorly conceived in terms of religious or political or economic power, as secured by social or intellectual standing, as connected with some of the myriad personal ambitions that encompass the mind and capture the imagination of humanity. That none of these conditions brings the happiness and satisfaction that are desired and expected is the universally acknowledged human experience. Yet the struggle for them unceasingly goes on. Those who do not have them remain obstinately

convinced that to have and to hold will surely bring them the liberty and comfort and security which their souls are seeking.

Back of all this tremendous battle for place and power is the blindly comprehended urge of heart and spirit for satisfactory and satisfying self-knowledge and self-expression. We desire to become acquainted with ourselves. We crave to be ourselves and to realize in our activities that we are ourselves. We long to rejoice because the full, widespread arms of our individuality encompass something that is genuine and worthwhile.

The metaphysician is more fully awake to the meaning of life than is the average human being, for he has more definitely realized that without a free spirit anything and everything that one gains in the way of material place and power becomes in turn another form of bondage and limitation.

If it is high office in the nation, there is the pressure and the pull of wavering, inconsequential and self-seeking public opinion. If it is influence and honor within the church, there are the prescribed garments and the appropriate atmosphere, the correct manners and the proper speech, for both priest and layman. If it is great riches, there is always the haunting fear of loss, the disheartening envy and disgusting sycophancy of one's fellows.

In all ways, in which the material supersedes the mental and spiritual, the worm of disillusionment and disappointment rots the core of the fruit of achievement.

Not easy to get, freedom is even less easy to keep. This is not on account of assaults from without. Such attacks are common enough, but they are also obvious in plan and purpose. They quickly arouse the majority of men and women, who are naturally upholders and defenders of individual liberty, to immediate and effective resistance.

The real reason why freedom when gained is not easy to keep is because it is unwittingly and foolishly thrown away by the indulgence of personal petty idiosyncrasies. Personal pride, so prone to usurp the place of sound judgment, is a constant destroyer of individual freedom. Bad temper, sensitiveness, perverseness and countless other small-minded traits of disposition and temperament continually fasten again the bonds that have been cast aside.

Unless established and fortified by the same restraint and good sense that won it, a great victory over limitation may at any moment be turned into an equally great defeat. Unfortunate excesses too often follow the most praiseworthy and justifiable rebellions against tyranny, the oppressed in their turn killing and running amuck that good may be the more strongly enthroned.

The very first impulse of the one who tastes new freedom is to say something or do something that will convince himself that he is no longer under the restraint that has been so oppressive to him. This impulsive expression is not in most cases really an attack on law and order. It is of the same nature as the wild yell and mad rush that children make when first out of school after an all day's confinement.

Unfortunately the psychological background of the startling and upsetting statements and actions of those just freed is not generally understood—in fact, is peculiarly apt to be misunderstood by those who are upholders of the conventional and established. Therefore, the one who has attained a certain amount of freedom and celebrated the fact thus indiscreetly is likely to find himself again under restraint, not because he has really intended to violate the established order, but because he has been unwise in the methods he has employed to assure himself that he actually is free.

While one may have a legitimate cause for rebellion against a tyrannical state of mind that has been controlling him—(though it must be recognized that in a last analysis it is always his own false belief and state of delusion regarding what is real and has power that holds him)—he is likely in getting free from it to make an unnecessary attack on rules and regulations that still are looked upon by many as essential for the safety and security of specific and general organized activities.

It is almost impossible, until the revolution of the few is well along towards becoming the evolution of the many, to make it clear, first of all to one's self and after that to others, that disagreements regarding mental attitudes and points of view, disagreements about the spirit manifested and the human concepts believed in, are not necessarily fundamental revolts against rules, regulations and laws, which may be at the moment associated with the attitudes and points of view.

It is true when rules and regulations, such as church decrees and medical claims, which are but temporary human beliefs, are put forth as divinely ordained and eternally unchangeable, that one is forced to declare himself in opposition to the mistaken concept, though not necessarily against the rules when operating in their proper sphere of the temporarily expedient.

He must rebel against the concept, because his individual right of free thought and demonstration is being interfered with—because he is being asked to accept as for all time that which is only a passing notion. No intelligent man or woman can permit such a dominating suggestion to find a place in his mentality without suffering the consequences sooner or later of either becoming the maker of tyrannies for others or the victim of the tyrannies of others.

Dominion by means of intelligent thinking is the coin with which one trades in the market places of freedom. Dominion is never domination. Domination is bondage for both the one who dominates and the one who is dominated. Dominion brings calm and peace, rest and achievement. He who has dominion neither pursues nor is pursued. In the end all persons and all things find their way into his mental environment to be analyzed by his free spirit and to be understood for what they really are. He never turns anyone away nor casts anything aside because the appearance, the superficial impression, happens to be displeasing to him. He tests the soul before he judges the body.

No one fights against unrealities. One fights because he believes that what he is fighting is real. From being blindly in bondage to some phase of belief, humanity steps into the recognition that it is in bondage. This is the fighting stage. Then it is that men and women arm themselves with every sort of weapon, pen and ink included, and go forth to battle. When one arrives at the perception of the actual unreality of a claim or condition, there is no more fight left for him on that particular point. He is free as far as that is concerned, and he is willing that others, whatever their views, shall be free also.

From one standpoint, because life is a progressive experience, fighting is eternal. The consistent warfare against the persistent suggestions of limitation are the proof that one thinks and lives. We dream strange dreams. We battle now, so we fancy, against principalities and powers—powers that continually suggest evil and fear—but we dream of the time when the influx of the truth will be imposed upon us whether we will or will not, when we shall be taken care of without so much as raising a finger or thinking a thought.

Would we enjoy that? Who could stand a life that was without fresh, unexplored opportunities to feel and to be, without struggle, strife, the chance of defeat, the joy of victory? One desires life just as long as he sees new worlds to conquer and finds new things to be done.

The eternal life-experience is the present life-experience. It will always demand of us what it demands of us today, the best of intelligence, the best of consecration and the best of sacrifice, in order that there may be expressed the best of individuality and the best of understanding and love.

THE END

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